

**Portrait Edition**

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# **English Men of Letters**

EDITED BY

**JOHN MORLEY**

VI.

BUNYAN. BY JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

JOHNSON. BY LESLIE STEPHEN

BACON. BY R. W. CHURCH, Dean of St. Paul's

**FACULTE DES ARTS  
COLLEGE UNIVERSITAIRE  
SHERBROOKE**

**GEORGE N. MORANG & COMPANY**

(Limited)

TORONTO, CANADA

1900

ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS.

EDITED BY JOHN MORLEY.

Portrait Edition.

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# BUNYAN

BY

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

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# BUNYAN.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE.

“I WAS of a low and inconsiderable generation, my father’s house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all families in the land.” “I never went to school, to Aristotle or Plato, but was brought up in my father’s house in a very mean condition, among a company of poor countrymen.” “Nevertheless, I bless God that by this door He brought me into the world to partake of the grace and life that is by Christ in His Gospel.” This is the account given of himself and his origin by a man whose writings have for two centuries affected the spiritual opinions of the English race in every part of the world more powerfully than any book or books, except the Bible.

John Bunyan was born at Elstow, a village near Bedford, in the year 1628. It was a memorable epoch in English history, for in that year the House of Commons extorted the consent of Charles I. to the Petition of Right. The stir of politics, however, did not reach the humble household into which the little boy was introduced. His father was hardly occupied in earning bread for his wife and children as a mender of pots and kettles: a tinker—

working in neighbours' houses or at home, at such business as might be brought to him. "The Bunyans," says a friend, "were of the national religion, as men of that calling commonly were." Bunyan himself, in a passage which has been always understood to refer to his father, describes him "as an honest, poor labouring man, who, like Adam unparadised, had all the world to get his bread in, and was very careful to maintain his family." In those days there were no village schools in England; the education of the poor was an apprenticeship to agriculture or handicraft; their religion they learnt at home or in church. Young Bunyan was more fortunate. In Bedford there was a grammar school, which had been founded in Queen Mary's time by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Harper. Hither, when he was old enough to walk to and fro, over the mile of road between Elstow and Bedford, the child was sent, if not to learn Aristotle and Plato, to learn at least "to read and write according to the rate of other poor men's children."

If religion was not taught at school, it was taught with some care in the cottages and farmhouses by parents and masters. It was common in many parts of England, as late as the end of the last century, for the farmers to gather their apprentices about them on Sunday afternoons, and to teach them the Catechism. Rude as was Bunyan's home, religious notions of some kind had been early and vividly impressed upon him. He caught, indeed, the ordinary habits of the boys among whom he was thrown. He learnt to use bad language, and he often lied. When a child's imagination is exceptionally active, the temptations to untruth are correspondingly powerful. The inventive faculty has its dangers, and Bunyan was eminently gifted in that way. He was a violent, passionate boy be-

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sides, and thus he says of himself that for lying and swearing he had no equal, and that his parents did not sufficiently correct him. Wickedness, he declares in his own remorseful story of his early years, became a second nature to him. But the estimate which a man forms of himself in later life, if he has arrived at any strong abhorrence of moral evil, is harsher than others at the time would have been likely to have formed. Even then the poor child's conscience must have been curiously sensitive, and it revenged itself upon him in singular tortures.

"My sins," he says, "did so offend the Lord that even in my childhood He did scare and affright me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with dreadful visions. I have been in my bed greatly afflicted while asleep, with apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid. I was afflicted with thoughts of the Day of Judgment night and day, trembling at the thoughts of the fearful torments of hell fire." When, at ten years old, he was running about with his companions in "his sports and childish vanities," these terrors continually recurred to him, yet "he would not let go his sins."

Such a boy required rather to be encouraged than checked in seeking innocent amusements. Swearing and lying were definite faults which ought to have been corrected; but his parents, perhaps, saw that there was something unusual in the child. To them he probably appeared not worse than other boys, but considerably better. They may have thought it more likely that he would conquer his own bad inclinations by his own efforts, than that they could mend him by rough rebukes.

When he left school he would naturally have been bound apprentice, but his father brought him up at his

own trade. Thus he lived at home, and grew to manhood there, forming his ideas of men and things out of such opportunities as the Elstow neighbourhood afforded.

From the time when the Reformation brought them a translation of it, the Bible was the book most read—it was often the only book which was read—in humble English homes. Familiarity with the words had not yet trampled the sacred writings into practical barrenness. No doubts or questions had yet risen about the Bible's nature or origin. It was received as the authentic word of God Himself. The Old and New Testament alike represented the world as the scene of a struggle between good and evil spirits; and thus every ordinary incident of daily life was an instance or illustration of God's providence. This was the universal popular belief, not admitted only by the intellect, but accepted and realised by the imagination. No one questioned it, save a few speculative philosophers in their closets. The statesman in the House of Commons, the judge on the Bench, the peasant in a midland village, interpreted literally by this rule the phenomena which they experienced or saw. They not only believed that God had miraculously governed the Israelites, but they believed that as directly and immediately He governed England in the seventeenth century. They not only believed that there had been a witch at Endor, but they believed that there were witches in their own villages, who had made compacts with the devil himself. They believed that the devil still literally walked the earth like a roaring lion; that he and the evil angels were perpetually labouring to destroy the souls of men; and that God was equally busy overthrowing the devil's work, and bringing sin and crimes to eventual punishment.

In this light the common events of life were actually

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looked at and understood, and the air was filled with anecdotes so told as to illustrate the belief. These stories and these experiences were Bunyan's early mental food. One of them, which had deeply impressed the imagination of the Midland counties, was the story of "Old Tod." This man came one day into court, in the Summer Assizes at Bedford, "all in a dung sweat," to demand justice upon himself as a felon. No one had accused him, but God's judgment was not to be escaped, and he was forced to accuse himself. "My Lord," said Old Tod to the judge, "I have been a thief from my childhood. I have been a thief ever since. There has not been a robbery committed these many years, within so many miles of this town, but I have been privy to it." The judge, after a conference, agreed to indict him of certain felonies which he had acknowledged. He pleaded guilty, implicating his wife along with him, and they were both hanged.

An intense belief in the moral government of the world creates what it insists upon. Horror at sin forces the sinner to confess it, and makes others eager to punish it. "God's revenge against murder and adultery" becomes thus an actual fact, and justifies the conviction in which it rises. Bunyan was specially attentive to accounts of judgments upon swearing, to which he was himself addicted. He tells a story of a man at Wimbledon, who, after uttering some strange blasphemy, was struck with sickness, and died cursing. Another such scene he probably witnessed himself,<sup>1</sup> and never forgot. An alehouse-keeper in the neighbourhood of Elstow had a son who was half-witted. The favourite amusement, when a party was collected drink-

<sup>1</sup> The story is told by Mr. Attentive in the *Life of Mr. Badman*; but it is almost certain that Bunyan was relating his own experience.

ing, was for the father to provoke the lad's temper, and for the lad to curse his father and wish the devil had him. The devil at last did have the alehouse-keeper, and rent and tore him till he died. "I," says Bunyan, "was eye and ear witness of what I here say. I have heard Ned in his roguery cursing his father, and his father laughing thereat most heartily, still provoking of Ned to curse that his mirth might be increased. I saw his father also when he was possessed. I saw him in one of his fits, and saw his flesh as it was thought gathered up in a heap about the bigness of half an egg, to the unutterable torture and affliction of the old man. There was also one Freeman, who was more than an ordinary doctor, sent for to cast out the devil, and I was there when he attempted to do it. The manner whereof was this. They had the possessed in an outroom, and laid him upon his belly upon a form, with his head hanging down over the form's end. Then they bound him down thereto; which done, they set a pan of coals under his mouth, and put something therein which made a great smoke—by this means, as it was said, to fetch out the devil. There they kept the man till he was almost smothered in the smoke, but no devil came out of him, at which Freeman was somewhat abashed, the man greatly afflicted, and I made to go away wondering and fearing. In a little time, therefore, that which possessed the man carried him out of the world, according to the cursed wishes of his son."

The wretched alehouse-keeper's life was probably sacrificed in this attempt to dispossess the devil. But the incident would naturally leave its mark on the mind of an impressionable boy. Bunyan ceased to frequent such places after he began to lead a religious life. The story, therefore, most likely belongs to the experiences of his first

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youth after he left school ; and there may have been many more of a similar kind, for, except that he was steady at his trade, he grew up a wild lad, the ringleader of the village apprentices in all manner of mischief. He had no books, except a life of Sir Bevis of Southampton, which would not tend to sober him ; indeed, he soon forgot all that he had learnt at school, and took to amusements and doubtful adventures, orchard - robbing, perhaps, or poaching, since he hints that he might have brought himself within reach of the law. In the most passionate language of self-abhorrence, he accuses himself of all manner of sins, yet it is improbable that he appeared to others what in later life he appeared to himself. He judged his own conduct as he believed that it was regarded by his Maker, by whom he supposed eternal torment to have been assigned as the just retribution for the lightest offence. Yet he was never drunk. He who never forgot anything with which he could charge himself, would not have passed over drunkenness, if he could remember that he had been guilty of it ; and he distinctly asserts, also, that he was never in a single instance unchaste. In our days, a rough tinker who could say as much for himself after he had grown to manhood would be regarded as a model of self-restraint. If, in Bedford and the neighbourhood, there was no young man more vicious than Bunyan, the moral standard of an English town in the seventeenth century must have been higher than believers in Progress will be pleased to allow.

He declares that he was without God in the world, and in the sense which he afterwards attached to the word this was probably true. But serious thoughts seldom ceased to work in him. Dreams only reproduce the forms and feelings with which the waking imagination is most engaged. Bunyan's rest continued to be haunted with the

phantoms which had terrified him when a child. He started in his sleep, and frightened the family with his cries. He saw evil spirits in monstrous shapes, and fiends blazing flames out of their nostrils. "Once," says a biographer, who knew him well, and had heard the story of his visions from his own lips, "he dreamed that he saw the face of heaven as it were on fire, the firmament crackling and shivering with the noise of mighty thunder, and an archangel flew in the midst of heaven, sounding a trumpet, and a glorious throne was seated in the east, whereon sat One in brightness like the morning star. Upon which he, thinking it was the end of the world, fell upon his knees and said, 'Oh, Lord, have mercy on me! What shall I do? The Day of Judgment is come, and I am not prepared.'"

At another time "he dreamed that he was in a pleasant place jovial and rioting, when an earthquake rent the earth, out of which came bloody flames, and the figures of men tossed up in globes of fire, and falling down again with horrible cries and shrieks and execrations, while devils mingled among them, and laughed aloud at their torments. As he stood trembling, the earth sank under him, and a circle of flames embraced him. But when he fancied he was at the point to perish, One in shining white raiment descended and plucked him out of that dreadful place, while the devils cried after him to take him to the punishment which his sins had deserved. Yet he escaped the danger, and leapt for joy when he awoke and found it was a dream."

Mr. Southey, who thinks wisely that Bunyan's biographers have exaggerated his early faults, considers that at worst he was a sort of "blackguard." This, too, is a wrong word. Young village blackguards do not dream of archangels flying through the midst of heaven, nor were

child. He started with his cries, and fiends bleeding say a biographer, many of his visions saw the face of it crackling and ever, and an archangel a trumpet, and hereon sat One which he, thinking on his knees and what shall I do? not prepared."

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Bunyan's biography considers that at This, too, is a do not dream aven, nor were

these imaginations invented afterwards, or rhetorically exaggerated. Bunyan was undoubtedly given to story-telling as a boy, and the recollection of it made him peculiarly scrupulous in his statements in later life. One trait he mentions of himself which no one would have thought of who had not experienced the feeling, yet every person can understand it and sympathise with it. These spectres and hobgoblins drove him wild. He says, "I was so overcome with despair of life and heaven, that I should often wish either that there had been no hell, or that I had been a devil; supposing that they were only tormentors, and that, if it must needs be that I went thither, I might be rather a tormentor than tormented myself."

The visions at last ceased. God left him to himself, as he puts it, and gave him over to his own wicked inclinations. He fell, he says, into all kinds of vice and ungodliness without further check. The expression is very strong, yet when we look for particulars we can find only that he was fond of games which Puritan preciseness disapproved. He had high animal spirits, and engaged in lawless enterprises. Once or twice he nearly lost his life. He is sparing of details of his outward history, for he regarded it as nothing but vanity; but his escapes from death were providences, and therefore he mentions them. He must have gone to the coast somewhere, for he was once almost drowned in a creek of the sea. He fell out of a boat into the river at another time, and it seems that he could not swim. Afterwards he seized hold of an adder, and was not bitten by it. These mercies were sent as warnings, but he says that he was too careless to profit by them. He thought that he had forgotten God altogether, and yet it is plain that he had not forgotten. A bad young man, who has shaken off religion because it is

a restraint, observes with malicious amusement the faults of persons who make a profession of religion. He infers that they do not really believe it, and only differ from their neighbours in being hypocrites. Bunyan notes this disposition in his own history of Mr. Badman. Of himself he says: "Though I could sin with delight and ease, and take pleasure in the villanies of my companions, even then, if I saw wicked things done by them that professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. Once, when I was in the height of my vanity, hearing one swear that was reckoned a religious man, it made my heart to ache."

He was now seventeen, and we can form a tolerably accurate picture of him—a tall, active lad, working as his father's apprentice at his pots and kettles, ignorant of books, and with no notion of the world beyond what he could learn in his daily drudgery, and the talk of the ale-house and the village green; inventing lies to amuse his companions, and swearing that they were true; playing bowls and tipcat, ready for any reckless action, and always a leader in it, yet all the while singularly pure from the more brutal forms of vice, and haunted with feverish thoughts, which he tried to forget in amusements. It has been the fashion to take his account of himself literally, and represent him as the worst of reprobates, in order to magnify the effects of his conversion, and perhaps to make intelligible to his admiring followers the reproaches which he heaps upon himself. They may have felt that they could not be wrong in explaining his own language in the only sense in which they could attach a meaning to it. Yet, sinner though he may have been, like all the rest of us, his sins were not the sins of coarseness and vulgarity. They were the sins of a youth of sensitive nature and very peculiar gifts—gifts which brought special temptations

with them, and inclined him to be careless and desperate, yet from causes singularly unlike those which are usually operative in dissipated and uneducated boys.

It was now the year 1645. Naseby Field was near, and the first Civil War was drawing to its close. At this crisis Bunyan was, as he says, drawn to be a soldier; and it is extremely characteristic of him and of the body to which he belonged, that he leaves us to guess on which side he served. He does not tell us himself. His friends in after-life did not care to ask him, or he to inform them, or else they also thought the matter of too small importance to be worth mentioning with exactness. There were two traditions, and his biographers chose between them as we do. Close as the connection was in that great struggle between civil and religious liberty—flung as Bunyan was flung into the very centre of the conflict between the English people and the Crown and Church and aristocracy—victim as he was himself of intolerance and persecution, he never but once took any political part, and then only in signing an address to Cromwell. He never showed any active interest in political questions; and if he spoke on such questions at all after the Restoration, it was to advise submission to the Stuart Government. By the side of the stupendous issues of human life, such miserable *rights* as men might pretend to in this world were not worth contending for. The only *right* of man that he thought much about, was the right to be eternally damned if he did not lay hold of grace. King and subject were alike creatures, whose sole significance lay in their individual immortal souls. Their relations with one another upon earth were nothing in the presence of the awful judgment which awaited them both. Thus, whether Bunyan's brief career in the army was under Charles or under Fairfax must re-

main doubtful. Probability is on the side of his having been with the Royalists. His father was of "the national religion." He himself had as yet no special convictions of his own. John Gifford, the Baptist minister at Bedford, had been a Royalist. The only incident which Bunyan speaks of connected with his military experience points in the same direction. "When I was a soldier," he says, "I was with others drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it. But when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room. Coming to the siege as he stood sentinel he was shot in the heart with a musket bullet and died." Tradition agrees that the place to which these words refer was Leicester. Leicester was stormed by the King's troops a few days before the battle of Naseby. It was recovered afterwards by the Parliamentarians, but on the second occasion there was no fighting, as it capitulated without a shot being fired. Mr. Carlyle supposes that Bunyan was not with the attacking party, but was in the town as one of the garrison, and was taken prisoner there. But this cannot be, for he says expressly that he was one of the besiegers. Legend gathers freely about eminent men, about men especially who are eminent in religion, whether they are Catholic or Protestant. Lord Macaulay is not only positive that the hero of the English Dissenters fought on the side of the Commonwealth, but he says, without a word of caution on the imperfection of the evidence, "His Greatheart, his Captain Boanerges, and his Captain Credence, are evidently portraits of which the originals were among those martial saints who fought and expounded in Fairfax's army."<sup>1</sup>

If the martial saints had impressed Bunyan so deeply,

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Bunyan: Collected Works*, vol. vii. p. 299.

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it is inconceivable that he should have made no more allusion to his military service than in this brief passage. He refers to the siege and all connected with it merely as another occasion of his own providential escapes from death.

Let the truth of this be what it may, the troop to which he belonged was soon disbanded. He returned at the end of the year to his tinker's work at Elstow much as he had left it. The saint, if he had met with saints, had not converted him. "I sinned still," he says, "and grew more and more rebellious against God and careless of my own salvation." An important change of another kind, however, lay before him. Young as he was, he married. His friends advised it, for they thought that marriage would make him steady. The step was less imprudent than it would have been had Bunyan been in a higher rank of life, or had aimed at rising into it. The girl whom he chose was a poor orphan, but she had been carefully and piously brought up, and from her acceptance of him, something more may be inferred about his character. Had he been a dissolute, idle scamp, it is unlikely that a respectable woman would have become his wife when he was a mere boy. His sins, whatever these were, had not injured his outward circumstances; it is clear that all along he worked skilfully and industriously at his tinkering business. He had none of the habits which bring men to beggary. From the beginning of his life to the end of it he was a prudent, careful man, and, considering the station to which he belonged, a very successful man.

"I lighted on a wife," he says, "whose father was counted godly. We came together as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or a spoon between us. But she had for her portion two

books, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, and *The Practice of Piety*, which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I sometimes read with her. I found some things pleasing to me, but all this while I met with no conviction. She often told me what a godly man her father was; how he would reprove and correct vice both in his house and among his neighbours; what a strict and holy life he lived in his day, both in word and deed. These books, though they did not reach my heart, did light in me some desire to religion."

There was still an Established Church in England, and the constitution of it had not yet been altered. The Presbyterian platform threatened to take the place of Episcopacy, and soon did take it; but the clergyman was still a priest, and was still regarded with pious veneration in the country districts as a semi-supernatural being. The altar yet stood in its place, the minister still appeared in his surplice, and the Prayers of the Liturgy continued to be read or intoned. The old familiar bells, Catholic as they were in all the emotions which they suggested, called the congregation together with their musical peal, though in the midst of triumphant Puritanism. The *Book of Sports*, which, under an order from Charles I., had been read regularly in Church, had in 1644 been laid under a ban; but the gloom of a Presbyterian Sunday was, is, and for ever will be detestable to the natural man; and the Elstow population gathered persistently after service on the village green for their dancing, and their leaping, and their archery. Long habit cannot be transformed in a day by an Edict of Council, and amidst army manifestoes and battles of Marston Moor, and a king dethroned and imprisoned, old English life in Bedfordshire preserved its familiar features. These Sunday sports had been a special

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delight to Bunyan, and it is to them which he refers in the following passage, when speaking of his persistent wickedness. On his marriage he became regular and respectable in his habits. He says, "I fell in with the religion of the times to go to church twice a day, very devoutly to say and sing as the others did, yet retaining my wicked life. Withal I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition that I adored with great devotion even all things, both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else belonging to the Church, counting all things holy therein contained, and especially the priest and clerk most happy and without doubt greatly blessed. This conceit grew so strong in my spirit that had I but seen a priest, though never so sordid and debauched in his life, I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence, and be knit to him—their name, their garb, and work did so intoxicate and bewitch me."

Surely if there were no other evidence, these words would show that the writer of them had never listened to the expositions of the martial saints.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONVICTION OF SIN.

*The Pilgrim's Progress* is the history of the struggle of human nature to overcome temptation and shake off the bondage of sin, under the convictions which prevailed among serious men in England in the seventeenth century. The allegory is the life of its author cast in an imaginative form. Every step in Christian's journey had been first trodden by Bunyan himself; every pang of fear and shame, every spasm of despair, every breath of hope and consolation, which is there described, is but a reflexion as on a mirror from personal experience. It has spoken to the hearts of all later generations of Englishmen because it came from the heart; because it is the true record of the genuine emotions of a human soul; and to such a record the emotions of other men will respond, as one stringed instrument vibrates responsively to another. The poet's power lies in creating sympathy; but he cannot, however richly gifted, stir feelings which he has not himself known in all their intensity.

"Ut ridentibus arrident ita flentibus adflent  
Humani vultus. Si vis me flere dolendum est  
Primum ipsi tibi."

The religious history of man is essentially the same in all ages. It takes its rise in the duality of his nature. He

is an animal, and as an animal he desires bodily pleasure and shrinks from bodily pain. As a being capable of morality, he is conscious that for him there exists a right and wrong. Something, whatever that something may be, binds him to choose one and avoid the other. This is his religion, his religatio, his obligation, in the sense in which the Romans, from whom we take it, used the word; and obligation implies some superior power to which man owes obedience. The conflict between his two dispositions agitates his heart and perplexes his intellect. To do what the superior power requires of him, he must thwart his inclinations. He dreads punishment, if he neglects to do it. He invents methods by which he can indulge his appetites, and finds a substitute by which he can propitiate his invisible ruler or rulers. He offers sacrifices; he institutes ceremonies and observances. This is the religion of the body, the religion of fear. It is what we call superstition. In his nobler moods he feels that this is but to evade the difficulty. He perceives that the sacrifice required is the sacrifice of himself. It is not the penalty for sin which he must fear, but the sin itself. He must conquer his own lower nature. He must detach his heart from his pleasures, and he must love good for its own sake, and because it is his only real good; and this is spiritual religion or piety. Between these two forms of worship of the unseen, the human race has swayed to and fro from the first moment in which they learnt to discern between good and evil. Superstition attracts, because it is indulgent to immorality by providing means by which God can be pacified. But it carries its antidote along with it, for it keeps alive the sense of God's existence; and when it has produced its natural effects, when the believer rests in his observances and lives practically as if

there was no God at all, the conscience again awakes. Sacrifices and ceremonies become detested as idolatry, and religion becomes conviction of sin, a fiery determination to fight with the whole soul against appetite, vanity, self-seeking, and every mean propensity which the most sensitive alarm can detect. The battle unhappily is attended with many vicissitudes. The victory, though practically it may be won, is never wholly won. The struggle brings with it every variety of emotion, alternations of humility and confidence, despondency and hope. The essence of it is always the same—the effort of the higher nature to overcome the lower. The form of it varies from period to period, according to the conditions of the time, the temperament of different people, the conception of the character of the Supreme Power, which the state of knowledge enables men to form. It will be found even when the puzzled intellect can see no light in Heaven at all, in the stern and silent fulfilment of moral duty. It will appear as enthusiasm; it will appear as asceticism; it will appear wherever there is courage to sacrifice personal enjoyment for a cause believed to be holy. We must all live. We must all, as we suppose, in one shape or other, give account for our actions; and accounts of the conflict are most individually interesting when it is an open wrestle with the enemy; as we find in the penances and austerities of the Catholic saints, or when the difficulties of belief are confessed and detailed, as in David's Psalms, or in the Epistles of St. Paul. St. Paul, like the rest of mankind, found a law in his members warring against the law which was in his heart. The problem presented to him was how one was to be brought into subjection to the other, and the solution was by "the putting on of Christ." St. Paul's mind was charged with

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the ideas of Oriental and Greek philosophy then prevalent in the Roman Empire. His hearers understood him, because he spoke in the language of the prevailing speculations. We who have not the clue cannot, perhaps, perfectly understand him; but his words have been variously interpreted as human intelligence has expanded, and have formed the basis of the two great theologies which have been developed out of Christianity. The Christian religion taught that evil could not be overcome by natural human strength. The Son of God had come miraculously upon earth, had lived a life of stainless purity, and had been offered as a sacrifice to redeem men conditionally from the power of sin. The conditions, as English Protestant theology understands them, are nowhere more completely represented than in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The Catholic theology, rising as it did in the two centuries immediately following St. Paul, approached, probably, nearer to what he really intended to say.

Catholic theology, as a system, is a development of Platonism. The Platonists had discovered that the seat of moral evil was material substance. In matter, and therefore in the human body, there was either some inherent imperfection, or some ingrained perversity and antagonism to good. The soul, so long as it was attached to the body, was necessarily infected by it; and as human life on earth consisted in the connection of soul and body, every single man was necessarily subject to infirmity. Catholic theology accepted the position and formulated an escape from it. The evil in matter was a fact. It was explained by Adam's sin. But there it was. The taint was inherited by all Adam's posterity. The flesh of man was incurably vitiated, and if he was to be saved, a new body must be prepared for him. This Christ had done.

That Christ's body was not as other men's bodies was proved after his resurrection, when it showed itself independent of the limitations of extended substance. In virtue of these mysterious properties, it became the body of the Corporate Church, into which believers were admitted by baptism. The natural body was not at once destroyed, but a new element was introduced into it, by the power of which, assisted by penance, and mortification, and the spiritual food of the Eucharist, the grosser qualities were gradually subdued, and the corporeal system was changed. Then body and spirit became alike pure together, and the saint became capable of obedience, so perfect as not only to suffice for himself, but to supply the wants of others. The corruptible put on incorruption. The bodies of the saints worked miracles, and their flesh was found unaffected by decay after hundreds of years.

This belief, so long as it was sincerely held, issued naturally in characters of extreme beauty—of beauty so great as almost to demonstrate its truth. The purpose of it, so far as it affected action, was self-conquest. Those who try with their whole souls to conquer themselves find the effort lightened by a conviction that they are receiving supernatural assistance; and the form in which the Catholic theory supposed the assistance to be given was at least perfectly innocent. But it is in the nature of human speculations, though they may have been entertained at first in entire good faith, to break down under trial, if they are not in conformity with fact. Catholic theology furnished Europe with a rule of faith and action which lasted 1500 years. For the last three centuries of that period it was changing from a religion into a superstition, till, from being the world's guide, it became its scandal. "The body of Christ" had become a kingdom of this

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world, insulting its subjects by the effrontery of its ministers, the insolence of its pretensions, the mountains of lies which it was teaching as sacred truths. Luther spoke; and over half the Western world the Catholic Church collapsed, and a new theory and Christianity had to be constructed out of the fragments of it.

There was left behind a fixed belief in God and in the Bible as His revealed word, in a future judgment, in the fall of man, in the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ, and in the new life which was made possible by His resurrection. The change was in the conception of the method by which the atonement was imagined to be efficacious. The material or sacramental view of it, though it lingered inconsistently in the mind even of Luther himself, was substantially gone. New ideas adopted in enthusiasm are necessarily extreme. The wrath of God was held to be inseparably and eternally attached to every act of sin, however infirm the sinner. That his nature could be changed, and that he could be mystically strengthened by incorporation with Christ's body in the Church, was contrary to experience, and was no longer credible. The conscience of every man, in the Church or out of it, told him that he was daily and hourly offending. God's law demanded a life of perfect obedience, eternal death being the penalty of the lightest breach of it. No human being was capable of such perfect obedience. He could not do one single act which would endure so strict a scrutiny. All mankind were thus included under sin. The Catholic Purgatory was swept away. It had degenerated into a contrivance for feeding the priests with money, and it implied that human nature could in itself be renovated by its own sufferings. Thus nothing lay before the whole race except everlasting reprobation. But the door of hope had

been opened on the cross of Christ. Christ had done what man could never do. He had fulfilled the law perfectly. God was ready to accept Christ's perfect righteousness as a substitute for the righteousness which man was required to present to him, but could not. The conditions of acceptance were no longer sacraments or outward acts, or lame and impotent efforts after a moral life, but faith in what Christ had done; a complete self-abnegation, a resigned consciousness of utter unworthiness, and an unreserved acceptance of the mercy held out through the Atonement. It might have been thought that since man was born so weak that it was impossible for him to do what the law required, consideration would be had for his infirmity; that it was even dangerous to attribute to the Almighty a character so arbitrary as that He would exact an account from his creatures which the creature's necessary inadequacy rendered him incapable of meeting. But the impetuosity of the new theology would listen to no such excuses. God was infinitely pure, and nothing impure could stand in his sight. Man, so long as he rested on merit of his own, must be for ever excluded from his presence. He must accept grace on the terms on which it was held out to him; then, and then only, God would extend his pity to him. He was no longer a child of wrath: he was God's child. His infirmities remained, but they were constantly obliterated by the merits of Christ. And he had strength given to him, partially, at least, to overcome temptation, under which, but for that strength, he would have fallen. Though nothing which he could do could deserve reward, yet he received grace in proportion to the firmness of his belief; and his efforts after obedience, imperfect though they might be, were accepted for Christ's sake. A good life, or a constant effort after a good life,

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was still the object which a man was bound to labour after. Though giving no claim to pardon, still less for reward, it was the necessary fruit of a sense of what Christ had done, and of love and gratitude towards him. Good works were the test of saving faith; and if there were no signs of them, the faith was barren: it was not real faith at all.

This was the Puritan belief in England in the seventeenth century. The reason starts at it, but all religion is paradoxical to reason. God hates sin, yet sin exists. He is omnipotent, yet evil is not overcome. The will of man is free, or there can be no guilt; yet the action of the will, so far as experience can throw light on its operation, is as much determined by antecedent causes as every other natural force. Prayer is addressed to a Being assumed to be omniscient; who knows better what is good for us than we can know; who sees our thoughts without requiring to hear them in words; whose will is fixed and cannot be changed. Prayer, therefore, in the eye of reason, is an impertinence. The Puritan theology is not more open to objection on the ground of unreasonableness than the Catholic theology, or any other which regards man as answerable to God for his conduct. We must judge of a creed by its effects on character, as we judge of the wholesomeness of food as it conduces to bodily health. And the creed which swept like a wave through England at that time, and recommended itself to the noblest and most powerful intellects, produced also in those who accepted it a horror of sin, an enthusiasm for justice, purity, and manliness, which can be paralleled only in the first age of Christianity. Certainly there never was such a theory to take man's conceit out of him. He was a miserable wretch, so worthless at his best as to deserve everlasting perdition. If he was to be saved at all, he could be saved only by the unmerited

grace of God. In himself he was a child of the devil; and hell, not in metaphor, but in hard and palpable fact, inevitably waited for him. This belief, or the affectation of this belief, continues to be professed, but without a realisation of its tremendous meaning. The form of words is repeated by multitudes who do not care to think what they are saying. Who can measure the effect of such a conviction upon men who were in earnest about their souls, who were assured that this account of their situation was actually true, and on whom, therefore, it bore with increasing weight in proportion to their sincerity?

With these few prefatory words, I now return to Bunyan. He had begun to go regularly to church, and by church he meant the Church of England. The change in the constitution of it, even when it came, did not much alter its practical character in the country districts. At Elstow, as we have seen, there was still a high place; then was still a liturgy; there was still a surplice. The Church of England is a compromise between the old theology and the new. The Bishops have the apostolical succession, but many of them disbelieve that they derive any virtue from it. The clergyman is either a priest who can absolve men from sins, or he is a minister, as in other Protestant communions. The sacraments are either means of grace or mere outward signs. A Christian is either saved by baptism or saved by faith, as he pleases to believe. In either case he may be a member of the Church of England. The effect of such uncertain utterances is to leave an impression that, in defining such points closely, theologians are laying down lines of doctrines about subjects of which they know nothing, that the real truth of religion lies in what is common to the two theories, the obligation to lead a moral life; and to this sensible view of their functions

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the bishops and clergy had, in fact, gradually faded . the last century, when the revival of what is called earnestness first in the form of Evangelicalism, and then of Anglo-Catholicism, awoke again the old controversies.

To a man of fervid temperament suddenly convinced of sin, incapable of being satisfied with ambiguous answers to questions which mean life or death to him, the Church of England has little to say. If he is quiet and reasonable, he finds in it all that he desires. Enthusiastic ages and enthusiastical temperaments demand something more complete and consistent. The clergy under the Long Parliament caught partially the tone of the prevailing spirit. The reading of the *Book of Sports* had been interdicted, and from their pulpits they lectured their congregations on the ungodliness of the Sabbath amusements. But the congregations were slow to listen, and the sports went on.

One Sunday morning, when Bunyan was at church with his wife, a sermon was delivered on this subject. It seemed to be especially addressed to himself, and it much affected him. He shook off the impression, and after dinner he went as usual to the green. He was on the point of striking at a ball when the thought rushed across his mind, Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell ? He looked up. The reflection of his own emotion was before him in visible form. He imagined that he saw Christ himself looking down at him from the sky. But he concluded that it was too late for him to repent. He was past pardon. He was sure to be damned, and he might as well be damned for many sins as for few. Sin, at all events, was pleasant, the only pleasant thing that he knew ; therefore he would take his fill of it. The sin was the game, and nothing but the game. He

continued to play, but the Puritan sensitiveness had taken hold of him. An artificial offence had become a real offence when his conscience was wounded by it. He was reckless and desperate.

"This temptation of the devil," he says, "is more usual among poor creatures than many are aware of. It continued with me about a month or more; but one day, as I was standing at a neighbour's shop-window, and there cursing and swearing after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house and heard me, who, though she was a loose and ungodly wretch, protested that I swore and cursed at such a rate that she trembled to hear me. I was able to spoil all the youths in a whole town. At this reproof I was silenced and put to secret shame, and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven. I stood hanging down my head, and wishing that I might be a little child, that my father might learn me to speak without this wicked sin of swearing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed to it that it is vain to think of a reformation."

These words have been sometimes taken as a reflection on Bunyan's own father, as if he had not sufficiently checked the first symptoms of a bad habit. If this was so, too much may be easily made of it. The language in the houses of ignorant workmen is seldom select. They have not a large vocabulary, and the words which they use do not mean what they seem to mean. But so sharp and sudden remorse speaks remarkably for Bunyan himself. At this time he could have been barely twenty years old, and already he was quick to see when he was doing wrong, to be sorry for it, and to wish that he could do better. Vain the effort seemed to him, yet from that moment "he did leave off swearing, to his own great won-

der;" and he found "that he could speak better and more pleasantly than he did before."

It lies in the nature of human advance on the road of improvement, that, whatever be a man's occupation, be it handicraft, or art, or knowledge, or moral conquest of self, at each forward step which he takes he grows more conscious of his shortcomings. It is thus with his whole career, and those who rise highest are least satisfied with themselves. Very simply Bunyan tells the story of his progress. On his outward history, on his business and his fortunes with it, he is totally silent. Worldly interests were not worth mentioning. He is solely occupied with his rescue from spiritual perdition. Soon after he had profited by the woman's rebuke, he fell in "with a poor man that made profession of religion and talked pleasantly of the Scriptures." Earnestness in such matters was growing common among English labourers. Under his new friend's example, Bunyan "brought him to the Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading it," but especially, as he admits frankly (and most people's experience will have been the same), "the historical part; for as for St. Paul's Epistles and Scriptures of that nature, he could not away with them, being as yet ignorant of the corruption of his nature, or of the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save him."

Not as yet understanding these mysteries, he set himself to reform his life. He became strict with himself in word and deed. "He set the Commandments before him for his way to heaven." "He thought if he could but keep them pretty well he should have comfort." If now and then he broke one of them, he suffered in conscience; he repented of his fault; he made good resolutions for the future, and struggled to carry them out. "His neighbours

took him to be a new man, and marvelled at the alteration." Pleasure of any kind, even the most innocent, he considered to be a snare to him, and he abandoned it. He had been fond of dancing, but he gave it up. Music and singing he parted with, though it distressed him to leave them. Of all amusements, that in which he had most delighted had been in ringing the bells in Elstow church tower. With his bells he could not part all at once. He would no longer ring himself: but when his friends were enjoying themselves with the ropes, he could not help going now and then to the tower door to look on and listen; but he feared at last that the steeple might fall upon him and kill him. We call such scruples in these days exaggerated and fantastic. We are no longer in danger ourselves of suffering from similar emotions. Whether we are the better for having got rid of them will be seen in the future history of our race.

Notwithstanding his struggles and his sacrifices, Bunyan found that they did not bring him the peace which he expected. A man can change his outward conduct; but if he is in earnest, he comes in sight of other features in himself which he cannot change so easily—the meannesses, the paltrinesses, the selfishnesses which haunt him in spite of himself, which start out upon him at moments the most unlooked for, which taint the best of his actions and make him loathe and hate himself. Bunyan's life was now, for so young a person, a model of correctness; but he had no sooner brought his actions straight than he discovered that he was admiring and approving of himself. No situation is more humiliating, none brings with it a feeling of more entire hopelessness. "All this while," he says, "I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope; and had I then died, my state had been most fearful. I was but a poor

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painted hypocrite, going about to establish my own right-  
eousness."

Like his own Pilgrim, he had the burden on his back of  
his conscious unworthiness. How was he to be rid of it?

"One day, in a street in Bedford, as he was at work  
in his calling, he fell in with three or four poor women sit-  
ting at a door in the sun talking about the things of God." He  
was himself at that time "a brisk talker" about the  
matters of religion, and he joined these women. Their ex-  
pressions were wholly unintelligible to him. "They were  
speaking of the wretchedness of their own hearts, of their  
unbelief, of their miserable state. They did contemn,  
slight, and abhor their own righteousness as filthy and in-  
sufficient to do them any good. They spoke of a new  
birth and of the work of God in their hearts, which com-  
forted and strengthened them against the temptations of  
the devil."

The language of the poor women has lost its old mean-  
ing. They themselves, if they were alive, would not use  
it any longer. The conventional phrases of Evangelical  
Christianity ring untrue in a modern ear like a cracked  
bell. We have grown so accustomed to them as a cant,  
that we can hardly believe that they ever stood for sincere  
convictions. Yet these forms were once alive with the  
profoundest of all moral truths—a truth not of a narrow  
theology, but which lies at the very bottom of the well, at  
the fountain-head of human morality; namely, that a man  
who would work out his salvation must cast out self,  
though he rend his heart-strings in doing it; not love of  
self-indulgence only, but self-applause, self-confidence, self-  
conceit and vanity, desire or expectation of reward; self  
in all the subtle ingenuities with which it winds about the  
soul. In one dialect or another, he must recognize that

he is himself a poor creature not worth thinking of, or he will not take the first step towards excellency in any single thing which he undertakes.

Bunyan left the women and went about his work, but their talk went with him. "He was greatly affected." "He saw that he wanted the true tokens of a godly man." He sought them out, and spoke with them again and again. He could not stay away; and the more he went, the more he questioned his condition.

"I found two things," he says, "at which I did sometimes marvel, considering what a blind, ungodly wretch but just before I was; one, a great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what, by Scripture, they asserted; the other, a great bending of my mind to a continual meditating on it. My mind was now like a horse-leech at the vein, still crying, Give, give; so fixed on eternity and on the kingdom of heaven (though I knew but little), that neither pleasure, nor profit, nor persuasion, nor threats could loosen it or make it let go its hold. It is in very deed a certain truth; it would have been then as difficult for me to have taken my mind from heaven to earth, as I have found it often since to get it from earth to heaven."

Ordinary persons who are conscious of trying to do right, who resist temptations, are sorry when they slip, and determine to be more on their guard for the future, are well contented with the condition which they have reached. They are respectable; they are right-minded in common things; they fulfil their every-day duties to their families and to society with a sufficiency for which the world speaks well of them, as indeed it ought to speak; and they themselves acquiesce in the world's verdict. Any passionate agitation about the state of their souls they

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consider unreal and affected. Such men may be amiable in private life, good neighbours, and useful citizens ; but be their talents what they may, they could not write a *Pilgrim's Progress*, or ever reach the Delectable Mountains, or even be conscious that such mountains exist.

Bunyan was on the threshold of the higher life. He knew that he was a very poor creature. He longed to rise to something better. He was a mere ignorant, untaught mechanic. He had not been to school with Aristotle and Plato. He could not help himself, or lose himself in the speculations of poets and philosophers. He had only the Bible, and, studying the Bible, he found that the wonder-working power in man's nature was Faith. Faith! What was it? What did it mean? Had he faith? He was but "a poor sot," and yet he thought that he could not be wholly without it. The Bible told him that if he had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, he could work miracles. He did not understand Oriental metaphors; here was a simple test which could be at once applied.

"One day," he writes, "as I was between Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me to try if I had faith by doing some miracle. I must say to the puddles that were in the horse-pads, "be dry," and truly at one time I was agoing to say so indeed. But just as I was about to speak, the thought came into my mind: Go under yonder hedge first and pray that God would make you able. But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me, that if I prayed and came again and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then be sure I had no faith, but was a castaway, and lost. Nay, thought I, if it be so, I will never try it yet, but will stay a little longer. Thus was I tossed between the devil and my

own ignorance, and so perplexed at some times that I could not tell what to do."

Common-sense will call this disease, and will think impatiently that the young tinker would have done better to attend to his business. But it must be observed that Bunyan was attending to his business, toiling all the while with grimed hands over his pots and kettles. No one ever complained that the pots and kettles were ill-mended. It was merely that, being simple-minded, he found in his Bible that, besides earning his bread, he had to save or lose his soul. Having no other guide, he took its words literally, and the directions puzzled him.

He grew more and more unhappy, more lowly in his own eyes—

"Wishing him like to those more rich in hope"—

like the women who were so far beyond him on the heavenly road. He was a poet without knowing it, and his gifts only served to perplex him further. His speculations assumed bodily forms which he supposed to be actual visions. He saw his poor friends sitting on the sunny side of a high mountain refreshing themselves in the warmth, while he was shivering in frost, and snow, and mist. The mountain was surrounded by a wall, through which he tried to pass, and searched long in vain for an opening through it. At last he found one, very straight and narrow, through which he struggled, after desperate efforts. "It showed him," he said, "that none could enter into life but those who were in downright earnest, and unless they left the wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin." The vision brought him no comfort, for it passed away, and left him still on the wrong side: a litt'l com-

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will think impossible. I have done better than I expected. I observed that Bunyan was gazing all the while at the title-page. No one could have been more ill-mended. He had found in his heart a desire to save or to be saved, and he took its words to heart.

He lowly in his

hope"—

on the heavenly heights, and it, and his own thoughts, were speculations which he could not be actual visitors to the sunny side of life. In the warmth, the light, and the mist. The clouds through which he passed, and for an opening moment, the light and narrow way, were desperate efforts. They entered into life and death, and unless they had been born again, there was only death. And for it passed away, a little com-

fortable self-conceit would have set him at rest. But, like all real men, Bunyan had the worst opinion of himself. He looked at his Bible again. He found that he must be elected. Was he elected? He could as little tell as whether he had faith. He knew that he longed to be elected, but "the Scripture trampled on his desire;" for it said, "It is not of him that willetteth, or of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" therefore, unless God had chosen him, his labour was in vain. The devil saw his opportunity; the devil, among his other attributes, must have possessed that of omnipresence; for whenever any human soul was in straits, he was personally at hand to take advantage of it.

"It may be that you are not elected," the tempter said to Bunyan. "It may be so indeed," thought he. "Why, then," said Satan, "you had as good leave off and strive no farther; for if, indeed, you should not be elected and chosen of God, there is no talk of your being saved."

A comforting text suggested itself. "Look at the generations of old; did any ever trust in the Lord and was confounded?" But these exact words, unfortunately, were only to be found in the Apocrypha. And there was a further distressing possibility, which has occurred to others besides Bunyan. Perhaps the day of grace was passed. It came on him one day as he walked in the country that perhaps those good people in Bedford were all that the Lord would save in those parts, and that he came too late for the blessing. True, Christ had said, "Compel them to come in, for yet there is room." It might be "that when Christ speake those words," He was thinking of him—him among the rest that he had chosen, and had meant to encourage him. But Bunyan was too simply modest to gather comfort from such aspiring thoughts. He de-

sired to be converted, craved for it, longed for it with all his heart and soul. "Could it have been gotten for gold," he said, "what would I not have given for it! Had I had a whole world it had all gone ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might have been in a converted state. But, oh! I was made sick by that saying of Christ: 'He called to Him whom He would, and they came to Him,' I feared He would not call me."

Election, conversion, day of grace, coming to Christ, have been pawed and fingered by unctuous hands for now two hundred years. The bloom is gone from the flower. The plumage, once shining with hues direct from heaven, is soiled and bedraggled. The most solemn of all realities have been degraded into the passwords of technical theology. In Bunyan's day, in camp and council chamber, in High Courts of Parliament, and among the poor drudges in English villages, they were still radiant with spiritual meaning. The dialect may alter; but if man is more than a brief floating bubble on the eternal river of time; if there be really an immortal part of him which need not perish; and if his business on earth is to save it from perishing—he will still try to pierce the mountain barrier; he will still find the work as hard as Bunyan found it. We live in days of progress and enlightenment; nature on a hundred sides has unlocked her storehouses of knowledge. But she has furnished no "open sesame" to bid the mountain gate fly wide which leads to conquest of self. There is still no passage there for "body and soul and sin."

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### CHAPTER III.

#### "GRACE ABOUNDING."

THE women in Bedford, to whom Bunyan had opened his mind, had been naturally interested in him. Young and rough as he was, he could not have failed to impress anyone who conversed with him with a sense that he was a remarkable person. They mentioned him to Mr. Gifford, the minister of the Baptist Church at Bedford. John Gifford had, at the beginning of the Civil War, been a loose young officer in the king's army. He had been taken prisoner when engaged in some exploit which was contrary to the usages of war. A court-martial had sentenced him to death, and he was to have been shot in a few hours, when he broke out of his prison with his sister's help, and, after various adventures, settled at Bedford as a doctor. The near escape had not sobered him. He led a disorderly life, drinking and gambling, till the loss of a large sum of money startled him into seriousness. In the language of the time, he became convinced of sin, and joined the Baptists, the most thorough-going and consistent of all the Protestant sects. If the Sacrament of Baptism is not a magical form, but is a personal act, in which the baptised person devotes himself to Christ's service, to baptise children at an age when they cannot understand what they are doing may well seem irrational and even impious.

Gifford, who was now the head of the Baptist community in the town, invited Bunyan to his house, and explained the causes of his distress to him. He was a lost sinner. It was true that he had parted with his old faults, and was leading a new life. But his heart was unchanged; his past offences stood in record against him. He was still under the wrath of God, miserable in his position, and therefore miserable in mind. He must become sensible of his lost state, and lay hold of the only remedy, or there was no hope for him.

There was no difficulty in convincing Bunyan that he was in a bad way. He was too well aware of it already. In a work of fiction, the conviction would be followed immediately by consoling grace. In the actual experience of a living human soul, the medicine operates less pleasantly.

"I began," he says, "to see something of the vanity and inward wretchedness of my wicked heart, for as yet I knew no great matter therein. But now it began to be discovered unto me, and to work for wickedness as it never did before. Lusts and corruptions would strongly put themselves forth within me in wicked thoughts and desires which I did not regard before. Whereas, before, my soul was full of longing after God; now my heart began to hanker after every foolish vanity."

Constitutions differ. Mr. Gifford's treatment, if it was ever good for any man, was too sharp for Bunyan. The fierce acid which had been poured into his wounds set them all festering again. He frankly admits that he was now farther from conversion than before. His heart, do what he would, refused to leave off desiring forbidden pleasures, and while this continued, he supposed that he was still under the law, and must perish by it. He compared him-

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self to the child who, as he was being brought to Christ, was thrown down by the devil and wallowed foaming. A less healthy nature might have been destroyed by these artificially created and exaggerated miseries. He supposed he was given over to unbelief and wickedness, and yet he relates, with touching simplicity :—

"As to the act of sinning I was never more tender than now. I durst not take up a pin or a stick, though but so big as a straw, for my conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch. I could not tell how to speak my words for fear I should misplace them."

But the care with which he watched his conduct availed him nothing. He was on a morass "that shook if he did but stir," and he was "there left both of God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and of all good things." Behind him lay the faults of his childhood and youth, every one of which he believed to be recorded against him. Within were his disobedient inclinations, which he conceived to be the presence of the devil in his heart. If he was to be presented clean of stain before God he must have a perfect righteousness, which was to be found only in Christ, and Christ had rejected him. "My original and inward pollution," he writes, "was my plague and my affliction. I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad, and I thought I was so in God's eyes too. I thought every one had a better heart than I had. I could have changed heart with anybody. I thought none but the devil himself could equal me for inward wickedness and pollution. Sure, thought I, I am given up to the devil and to a reprobate mind; and thus I continued for a long while, even for some years together."

And all the while the world went on so quietly; these things over which Bunyan was so miserable not seeming

to trouble anyone except himself; and as if they had no existence except on Sundays and in pious tal'ns. Old people were hunting after the treasures of this life, as if they were never to leave the earth. Professors of religion complained when they lost fortune or health; what were fortune and health to the awful possibilities which lay beyond the grave? To Bunyan the future life of Christianity was a reality as certain as the next day's sunrise; and he could have been happy on bread and water if he could have felt himself prepared to enter it. Every created being seemed better off than he was. He was sorry that God had made him a man. He "blessed the condition of the birds, beasts, and fishes, for they had not a sinful nature. They were not obnoxious to the wrath of God; they were not to go to hell-fire after death." He recalled the texts which spoke of Christ and forgiveness. He tried to persuade himself that Christ cared for him. He could have talked of Christ's love and mercy "even to the very crows which sat on the ploughed land before him." But he was too sincere to satisfy himself with formulas and phrases. He could not, he would not, profess to be convinced that things would go well with him when he was not convinced. Cold spasms of doubt laid hold of him—doubts, not so much of his own salvation, as of the truth of all that he had been taught to believe; and the problem had to be fought and grappled with, which lies in the intellectual nature of every genuine man, whether he be an *Æschylus* or a *Shakspeare*, or a poor working Bedfordshire mechanic. No honest soul can look out upon the world and see it as it really is, without the question rising in him whether there be any God that governs it at all. No one can accept the popular notion of heaven and hell as actually true, without being as ter-

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rified as Bunyan was. We go on as we do, and attend to our business and enjoy ourselves, because the words have no real meaning to us. Providence in its kindness leaves most of us unblessed or uncursed with natures of too fine a fibre.

Bunyan was hardly dealt with. "Whole floods of blasphemies," he says, "against God, Christ, and the Scriptures were poured upon my spirit; questions against the very being of God and of his only beloved Son, as whether there was in truth a God or Christ, or no, and whether the Holy Scriptures were not rather a fable and cunning story than the holy and pure Word of God."

"How can you tell," the tempter whispered, "but that the Turks have as good a Scripture to prove their Mahomet the Saviour, as we have to prove our Jesus is? Could I think that so many tens of thousands, in so many countries and kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to heaven, if there were indeed a heaven, and that we who lie in a corner of the earth should alone be blessed therewith? Every one doth think his own religion the rightest—both Jews, Moors, and Pagans; and how if all our faith, and Christ, and Scripture should be but 'a think so' too?" St. Paul spoke positively. Bunyan saw shrewdly that on St. Paul the weight of the whole Christian theory really rested. But "how could he tell but that St. Paul, being a subtle and cunning man, might give himself up to deceive with strong delusions?" "He was carried away by such thoughts as by a whirlwind."

His belief in the active agency of the devil in human affairs, of which he supposed that he had witnessed instances, was no doubt a great help to him. If he could have imagined that his doubts or misgivings had been suggested by a desire for truth, they would have been harder

to bear. More than ever he was convinced that he was possessed by the devil. He "compared himself to a child carried off by a gipsy." "Kick sometimes I did," he says, "and scream, and cry, but yet I was as bound in the wings of temptation, and the wind would bear me away." "I blessed the dog and toad, and counted the condition of everything that God had made far better than this dreadful state of mine. The dog or horse had no soul to perish under the everlasting weight of hell for sin, as mine was like to do."

Doubts about revelation and the truth of Scripture were more easy to encounter then than they are at present. Bunyan was protected by want of learning, and by a powerful predisposition to find the objections against the credibility of the Gospel history to be groundless. Critical investigation had not as yet analysed the historical construction of the sacred books; and scepticism, as he saw it in people round him, did actually come from the devil; that is, from a desire to escape the moral restraints of religion. The wisest, noblest, best instructed men in England at that time regarded the Bible as an authentic communication from God, and as the only foundation for law and civil society. The masculine sense and strong, modest intellect of Bunyan ensured his acquiescence in an opinion so powerfully supported. Fits of uncertainty recurred even to the end of his life; it must be so with men who are honestly in earnest; but his doubts were of course only intermittent, and his judgment was in the main satisfied that the Bible was, as he had been taught, the Word of God. This, however, helped him little; for in the Bible he read his own condemnation. The weight which pressed him down was the sense of his unworthiness. What was he that God should care for him? He fancied

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that he heard God saying to the angels, "This poor, simple wretch doth hanker after me, as if I had nothing to do with my mercy but to bestow it on such as he. Poor fool, how art thou deceived! It is not for such as thee to have favour with the Highest."

Miserable as he was, he clung to his misery as the one link which connected him with the object of his longings. If he had no hope of heaven, he was at least distracted that he must lose it. He was afraid of dying, yet he was still more afraid of continuing to live; lest the impression should wear away through time, and occupation and other interests should turn his heart away to the world, and thus his wounds might cease to pain him.

Readers of the "Pilgrim's Progress" sometimes ask with wonder, why, after Christian had been received into the narrow gate, and had been set forward upon his way, so many trials and dangers still lay before him. The answer is simply that Christian was a pilgrim, that the journey of life still lay before him, and at every step temptations would meet him in new, unexpected shapes. St. Anthony in his hermitage was beset by as many fiends as had ever troubled him when in the world. Man's spiritual existence is like the flight of a bird in the air; he is sustained only by effort, and when he ceases to exert himself he falls. There are intervals, however, of comparative calm, and to one of these the storm-tossed Bunyan was now approaching. He had passed through the Slough of Despond. He had gone astray after Mr. Legality, and the rocks had almost overwhelmed him. Evangelist now found him and put him right again, and he was to be allowed a breathing space at the Interpreter's house. As he was at his ordinary daily work, his mind was restlessly busy. Verses of Scripture came into his head, sweet while pres-

ent, but, like Peter's sheet, caught up again into heaven. We may have heard all our lives of Christ. Words and ideas with which we have been familiar from childhood are trodden into paths as barren as sand. Suddenly, we know not how, the meaning flashes upon us. The seed has found its way into some corner of our minds where it can germinate. The shell breaks, the cotyledons open, and the plant of faith is alive. So it was now to be with Bunyan.

"One day," he says, "as I was travelling into the country, musing on the wickedness of my heart, and considering the enmity that was in me to God, the Scripture came into my mind, 'He hath made peace through the blood of His cross.' I saw that the justice of God and my sinful soul could embrace and kiss each other. I was ready to swoon, not with grief and trouble, but with solid joy and peace." Everything became clear: the Gospel history, the birth, the life, the death of the Saviour; how gently he gave himself to be nailed on the cross for his (Bunyan's) sins. "I saw Him in the spirit," he goes on, "a Man on the right hand of the Father, pleading for me, and have seen the manner of His coming from heaven to judge the world with glory."

The sense of guilt which had so oppressed him was now a key to the mystery. "God," he says, "suffered me to be afflicted with temptations concerning these things, and then revealed them to me." He was crushed to the ground by the thought of his wickedness; "the Lord showed him the death of Christ, and lifted the weight away."

Now he thought he had a personal evidence from heaven that he was really saved. Before this, he had lain trembling at the mouth of hell; now he was so far away from it that he could scarce tell where it was. He fell in

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at this time with a copy of Luther's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, "so old that it was like to fall to pieces." Bunyan found in it the exact counterpart of his own experience: "of all the books that he had ever met with, it seemed to him the most fit for a wounded conscience."

Everything was supernatural with him: when a bad thought came into his mind, it was the devil that put it there. These breathings of peace he regarded as the immediate voice of his Saviour. Alas! the respite was but short. He had hoped that his troubles were over, when the tempter came back upon him in the most extraordinary form which he had yet assumed. Bunyan had himself left the door open; the evil spirits could only enter "Mansoul" through the owner's negligence, but once in, they could work their own wicked will. How it happened will be told afterwards. The temptation itself must be described first. Never was a nature more perversely ingenious in torturing itself.

He had gained Christ, as he called it. He was now tempted "to sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange Him for the things of this life—for anything." If there had been any real prospect of worldly advantage before Bunyan, which he could have gained by abandoning his religious profession, the words would have had a meaning; but there is no hint or trace of any prospect of the kind; nor in Bunyan's position could there have been. The temptation, as he called it, was a freak of fancy: fancy resenting the minuteness with which he watched his own emotions. And yet he says, "It lay upon me for a year, and did follow me so continually that I was not rid of it one day in a month, sometimes not an hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep. I could neither

eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast my eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, ‘Sell Christ for this, sell Him for that! Sell Him! Sell Him!’ ”

He had been haunted before with a notion that he was under a spell; that he had been fated to commit the unpardonable sin; and he was now thinking of Judas, who had been admitted to Christ’s intimacy, and had then betrayed him. Here it was before him—the very thing which he had so long dreaded. If his heart did but consent for a moment, the deed was done. His doom had overtaken him. He wrestled with the thought as it rose, thrust it from him “with his hands and elbows,” body and mind convulsed together in a common agony. As fast as the destroyer said, “Sell Him,” Bunyan said, “I will not; I will not; I will not; not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds!” One morning, as he lay in his bed, the voice came again, and would not be driven away. Bunyan fought against it till he was out of breath. He fell back exhausted, and, without conscious action of his will, the fatal sentence passed through his brain, “Let Him go if He will.”

That the “selling Christ” was a bargain in which he was to lose all and receive nothing is evident from the form in which he was overcome. Yet, if he had gained a fortune by fraud or forgery, he could not have been more certain that he had destroyed himself.

Satan had won the battle, and he, “as a bird shot from a tree, had fallen into guilt and despair.” He got out of bed, “and went moping into the fields,” where he wandered for two hours, “as a man bereft of life, and now past recovering,” “bound over to eternal punishment.” He shrank under the hedges, “in guilt and sorrow, bemoan-

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ing the hardness of his fate." In vain the words now came back that had so comforted him, "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." They had no application to him. He had acquired his birthright, but, like Esau, he had sold it, and could not any more find place for repentance. True, it was said that "all manner of sins and blasphemies should be forgiven unto men," but only such sins and blasphemies as had been committed in the natural state. Bunyan had received grace, and, after receiving it, had sinned against the Holy Ghost.

It was done, and nothing could undo it. David had received grace, and had committed murder and adultery after it. But murder and adultery, bad as they might be, were only transgressions of the law of Moses. Bunyan had sinned against the Mediator himself; "he had sold his Saviour." One sin, and only one, there was which could not be pardoned, and he had been guilty of it. Peter had sinned against grace, and even after he had been warned. Peter, however, had but denied his Master. Bunyan had sold him. He was no David or Peter, he was Judas. It was very hard. Others naturally as bad as he had been saved. Why had he been picked out to be made a Son of salvation? A Judas! Was there any point in which he was better than Judas? Judas had sinned with deliberate purpose: he "in a fearful hurry," and "against prayer and striving." But there might be more ways than one of committing the unpardonable sin, and there might be degrees of it. It was a dreadful condition. The old doubts came back.

"I was now ashamed," he says, "that I should be like such an ugly man as Judas. I thought how loathsome I should be to all the saints at the Day of Judgment. I was tempted to content myself by receiving some false

opinion, as that there should be no such thing as the Day of Judgment, that we should not rise again, that sin was no such grievous thing, the tempter suggesting that if these things should be indeed true, yet to believe otherwise would yield me ease for the present. If I must perish, I need not torment myself beforehand."

Judas! Judas! was now for ever before his eyes. So identified he was with Judas that he felt at times as if his breastbone was bursting. A mark like Cain's was on him. In vain he searched again through the catalogue of pardoned sinners. Manasseh had consulted wizards and familiar spirits. Manasseh had burnt his children in the fire to devils. He had found mercy; but, alas! Manasseh's sins had nothing of the nature of selling the Saviour. To have sold the Saviour "was a sin bigger than the sins of a country, of a kingdom, or of the whole world—not all of them together could equal it."

His brain was overstrained, it will be said. Very likely. It is to be remembered, however, who and what he was, and that he had overstrained it in his eagerness to learn what he conceived his Maker to wish him to be—a form of anxiety not common in this world. The cure was as remarkable as the disorder. One day he was "in a good man's shop," still "afflicting himself with self-abhorrence," when something seemed to rush in through an open window, and he heard a voice saying, "Didst ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?" Bunyan shared the belief of his time. He took the system of things as the Bible represented it; but his strong common sense put him on his guard against being easily credulous. He thought at the time that the voice was supernatural. After twenty years he said, modestly, that he "could not make a judgment of it." The effect, any way, was as if an an-

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gel had come to him and had told him that there was still hope. Hapless as his condition was, he might still pray for mercy, and might possibly find it. He tried to pray, and found it very hard. The devil whispered again that God was tired of him; God wanted to be rid of him and his importunities, and had, therefore, allowed him to commit this particular sin that he might hear no more of him. He remembered Esau, and thought that this might be too true: “the saying about Esau was a flaming sword barring the way of the tree of life to him.” Still he would not give in. “I can but die,” he said to himself; “and if it must be so, it shall be said that such an one died at the feet of Christ in prayer.”

He was torturing himself with illusions. Most of the saints in the Catholic Calendar have done the same. The most remorseless philosopher can hardly refuse a certain admiration for this poor uneducated village lad struggling so bravely in the theological spider’s web. The “Professors” could not comfort him, having never experienced similar distresses in their own persons. He consulted “an Antient Christian,” telling him that he feared that he had sinned against the Holy Ghost. The Antient Christian answered gravely that he thought so too. The devil having him at advantage, began to be witty with him. The devil suggested that, as he had offended the second or third Person of the Trinity, he had better pray the Father to mediate for him with Christ and the Holy Spirit. Then the devil took another turn. Christ, he said, was really sorry for Bunyan, but his case was beyond remedy. Bunyan’s sin was so peculiar, that it was not of the nature of those for which He had bled and died, and had not, therefore, been laid to His charge. To justify Bunyan he must come down and die again, and that was not to be thought

of. "Oh!" exclaimed the unfortunate victim, "the unthought-of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors that are effected by a thorough application of guilt (to a spirit) that is yielded to desperation. This is the man that hath his dwelling among the tombs."

Sitting in this humour on a settle in the street at Bedford, he was pondering over his fearful state. The sun in heaven seemed to grudge its light to him. "The stones in the street and the tiles on the houses did bend themselves against him." Each crisis in Bunyan's mind is always framed in the picture of some spot where it occurred. He was crying, "in the bitterness of his soul, How can God comfort such a wretch as I am?" As before, in the shop, a voice came in answer, "This sin is not unto death." The first voice had brought him hope, which was almost extinguished; the second was a message of life. The night was gone, and it was daylight. He had come to the end of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the spectres and the hobgoblins which had jibbered at him suddenly all vanished. A moment before he had supposed that he was out of reach of pardon—that he had no right to pray, no right to repent, or, at least, that neither prayer nor repentance could profit him. If his sin was not to death, then he was on the same ground as other sinners. If they might pray, he might pray, and might look to be forgiven on the same terms. He still saw that his "selling Christ" had been "most barbarous," but despair was followed by an extravagance, no less unbounded, of gratitude, when he felt that Christ would pardon even this.

"Love and affection for Christ," he says, "did work at this time such a strong and hot desire of revengement upon myself for the abuse I had done to Him, that, to speak as then I thought, had I had a thousand gallons of

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The waves had not wholly subsided; but we need not follow the undulations any farther. It is enough that after a "conviction of sin," considerably deeper than most people find necessary for themselves, Bunyan had come to realize what was meant by salvation in Christ, according to the received creed of the contemporary Protestant world. The intensity of his emotions arose only from the completeness with which he believed it. Man had sinned, and by sin was made a servant of the devil. His redemption was a personal act of the Saviour towards each individual sinner. In the Atonement Christ had before him each separate person whom he designed to save, blotting out his offences, however heinous they might be, and recording in place of them his own perfect obedience. Each reconciled sinner in return regarded Christ's sufferings as undergone immediately for himself, and gratitude for that great deliverance enabled and obliged him to devote his strength and soul thenceforward to God's service. In the seventeenth century, all earnest English Protestants held

this belief. In the nineteenth century, most of us repeat the phrases of this belief, and pretend to hold it. We think we hold it. We are growing more cautious, perhaps, with our definitions. We suspect that there may be mysteries in God's nature and methods which we cannot fully explain. The outlines of "the scheme of salvation" are growing indistinct; and we see it through a gathering mist. Yet the essence of it will remain true, whether we recognise it or not. While man remains man he will do things which he ought not to do. He will leave undone things which he ought to do. To will, may be present with him; but how to perform what he wills, he will never fully know, and he will still hate "the body of death" which he feels clinging to him. He will try to do better. When he falls, he will struggle to his feet again. He will climb and climb on the hill-side, though he never reaches the top, and knows that he can never reach it. His life will be a failure, which he will not dare to offer as a fit account of himself, or as worth a serious regard. Yet he will still hope that he will not be wholly cast away when, after his sleep in death, he wakes again.

Now, says Bunyan, there remained only the hinder part of the tempest. Heavenly voices continued to encourage him. "As I was passing in the field," he goes on, "I heard the sentence, thy righteousness is in heaven; and methought I saw, with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand, there I say, as my righteousness, so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me He wants my righteousness, for that was just before Him. Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed. I was loosed from my affliction and irons; my temptations also fled away, so that from that time those dreadful Scriptures of God left off to trouble me. Now

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went I home rejoicing for the grace and love of God. Christ of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. I now lived very sweetly at peace with God through Christ. Oh! methought, Christ! Christ! There was nothing but Christ before my eyes. I was not now only looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of His blood, burial, and resurrection, but considered Him as a whole Christ. All those graces that were now green in me were yet but like those cracked groats and fourpence half-pennies which rich men carry in their purses, while their gold is in their trunks at home. Oh! I saw my gold was in my trunk at home in Christ my Lord and Saviour. The Lord led me into the mystery of union with the Son of God, that I was joined to Him, that I was flesh of His flesh. If He and I were one, His righteousness was mine, His merits mine, His victory mine. Now I could see myself in heaven and earth at once; in heaven by my Christ, though on earth by my body and person. Christ was that common and public person in whom the whole body of His elect are always to be considered and reckoned. We fulfilled the law by Him, died by Him, rose from the dead by Him, got the victory over sin and death, the devil and hell by Him. I had cause to say, Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary."

## CHAPTER IV.

### CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

THE Pilgrim falls into the hands of Giant Despair because he has himself first strayed into Byeopath Meadow. Bunyan found an explanation of his last convulsion in an act of unbelief, on which, on looking back, he perceived that he had been guilty. He had been delivered out of his first temptation. He had not been sufficiently on his guard against temptations that might come in the future; nay, he had himself tempted God. His wife had been overtaken by a premature confinement, and was suffering acutely. It was at the time when Bunyan was exercised with questions about the truth of religion altogether. As the poor woman lay crying at his side, he had said, mentally, "Lord, if Thou wilt now remove this sad affliction from my wife, and cause that she be troubled no more therewith this night, then I shall know that Thou canst discern the more secret thoughts of the heart." In a moment the pain ceased, and she fell into a sleep which lasted till morning. Bunyan, though surprised at the time, forgot what had happened, till it rushed back upon his memory, when he had committed himself by a similar mental assent to selling Christ. He remembered the proof which had been given to him that God could and did discern his thoughts. God had discerned this second thought also, and in punishing him for it had punished him at the same time for

the doubt which he had allowed himself to feel. "I should have believed His word," he said, "and not have put an 'if' upon the all-seeingness of God."

The suffering was over now, and he felt that it had been infinitely beneficial to him. He understood better the glory of God and of his Son. The Scriptures had opened their secrets to him, and he had seen them to be in very truth the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Never so clearly as after this "temptation" had he perceived "the heights of grace, and love, and mercy." Two or three times "he had such strange apprehensions of the grace of God as had amazed him." The impression was so overpowering that if it had continued long "it would have rendered him incapable for business." He joined his friend Mr. Gifford's church. He was baptised in the Ouse, and became a professed member of the Baptist congregation. Soon after, his mental conflict was entirely over, and he had two quiet years of peace. Before a man can use his powers to any purpose, he must arrive at some conviction in which his intellect can acquiesce. "Calm yourself," says Jean Paul; "it is your first necessity. Be a stoic, if nothing else will serve." Bunyan had not been driven into stoicism. He was now restored to the possession of his faculties, and his remarkable ability was not long in showing itself.

The first consequence of his mental troubles was an illness. He had a cough which threatened to turn into consumption. He thought it was all over with him, and he was fixing his eyes "on the heavenly Jerusalem and the innumerable company of angels;" but the danger passed off, and he became well and strong in mind and body. Notwithstanding his various miseries, he had not neglected his business, and had, indeed, been specially successful.

By the time that he was twenty-five years old he was in a position considerably superior to that in which he was born. "God," says a contemporary biographer, "had increased his stores so that he lived in great credit among his neighbours." On May 13, 1653, Bedfordshire sent an address to Cromwell approving the dismissal of the Long Parliament, recognising Oliver himself as the Lord's instrument, and recommending the county magistrates as fit persons to serve in the Assembly which was to take its place. Among thirty-six names attached to this document appear those of Gifford and Bunyan. This speaks for itself: he must have been at least a householder and a person of consideration. It was not, however, as a prosperous brazier that Bunyan was to make his way. He had a gift of speech, which, in the democratic congregation to which he belonged, could not long remain hid. Young as he was, he had sounded the depths of spiritual experience. Like Dante, he had been in hell—the popular hell of English Puritanism—and in 1655, he was called upon to take part in the "ministry." He was modest, humble, shrinking. The minister when he preached was, according to the theory, an instrument uttering the words not of himself but of the Holy Spirit. A man like Bunyan, who really believed this, might well be alarmed. After earnest entreaty, however, "he made experiment of his powers" in private, and it was at once evident that, with the thing which these people meant by inspiration, he was abundantly supplied. No such preacher to the uneducated English masses was to be found within the four seas. He says that he had no desire of vainglory; no one who has studied his character can suppose that he had. He was a man of natural genius, who believed the Protestant form of Christianity to be completely true. He knew nothing

of philosophy, nothing of history, nothing of literature. The doubts to which he acknowledged being without their natural food, had never presented themselves in a form which would have compelled him to submit to remain uncertain. Doubt, as he had felt it, was a direct enemy of morality and purity, and as such he had fought with it and conquered it. Protestant Christianity was true. All mankind were perishing unless they saw it to be true. This was his message; a message—supposing him to have been right—of an importance so immeasurable that all else was nothing. He was still “afflicted with the fiery darts of the devil,” but he saw that he must not bury his abilities. “In fear and trembling,” therefore, he set himself to the work, and “did according to his power preach the Gospel that God had shewn him.”

“The Lord led him to begin where his Word began—with sinners. This part of my work,” he says, “I fulfilled with a great sense, for the terrors of the law and guilt for my transgressions lay heavy on my conscience. I preached what I felt. I had been sent to my hearers as from the dead. I went myself in chains to preach to them in chains, and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to beware of. I have gone full of guilt and terror to the pulpit door; God carried me on with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off.”

Many of Bunyan’s addresses remain in the form of theological treatises, and, that I may not have to return to the subject, I shall give some account of them. His doctrine was the doctrine of the best and strongest minds in Europe. It had been believed by Luther, it had been believed by Knox. It was believed at that moment by Oliver Cromwell as completely as by Bunyan himself. It was believed, so far as such a person could be said to believe

anything, by the all-accomplished Leibnitz himself. Few educated people use the language of it now. In them it was a fire from heaven shining like a sun in a dark world. With us the fire has gone out; in the place of it we have but smoke and ashes; and the Evangelical mind, in search of "something deeper and truer than satisfied the last century," is turning back to Catholic verities. What Bunyan had to say may be less than the whole truth: we shall scarcely find the still missing part of it in lines of thought which we have outgrown.

Bunyan preached wherever opportunity served—in woods, in barns, on village greens, or in town chapels. The substance of his sermons he revised and published. He began, as he said, with sinners, explaining the condition of men in the world. They were under the law, or they were under grace. Every person that came into the world was born under the law, and as such was bound, under pain of eternal damnation, to fulfil completely and continually every one of the Ten Commandments. The Bible said plainly, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The Ten Commandments extended into many more, and to fail in a single one was as fatal as to break them all. A man might go on for a long time, for sixty years perhaps, without falling. Bunyan does not mean that anyone really could do all this, but he assumes the possibility; yet he says if the man slipped once before he died, he would eternally perish. The law does not refer to words and actions only, but to thoughts and feelings. It followed a man in his prayers, and detected a wandering thought. It allowed no repentance to those who lived and died under it. If it was asked whether God could

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not pardon, as earthly judges pardon criminals, the answer was that it is not the law which is merciful to the earthly offender, but the magistrate. The law is an eternal principle. The magistrate may forgive a man without exacting satisfaction. The law knows no forgiveness. It can be as little changed as an axiom of mathematics. Repentance cannot undo the past. Let a man leave his sins and live as purely as an angel all the rest of his life, his old faults remain in the account against him, and his state is as bad as ever it was. God's justice once offended knows not pity or compassion, but runs on the offender like a lion and throws him into prison, there to lie to all eternity unless infinite satisfaction be given to it. And that satisfaction no son of Adam could possibly make.

This conception of Divine justice, not as a sentence of a judge, but as the action of an eternal law, is identical with Spinoza's. That every act involves consequences which cannot be separated from it, and may continue operative to eternity, is a philosophical position which is now generally admitted. Combined with the traditional notions of a future judgment and punishment in hell, the recognition that there was a law in the case, and that the law could not be broken, led to the frightful inference that each individual was liable to be kept alive and tortured through all eternity. And this, in fact, was the fate really in store for every human creature unless some extraordinary remedy could be found. Bunyan would allow no merit to anyone. He would not have it supposed that only the profane or grossly wicked were in danger from the law. "A man," he says, "may be turned from a vain, loose, open, profane conversation and sinning against the law, to a holy, righteous, religious life, and yet be under the same state and as sure to be damned as the others

that are more profane and loose." The natural man might think it strange, but the language of the curse was not to be mistaken. Cursed is every one who has failed to fulfil the whole law. There was not a person in the whole world who had not himself sinned in early life. All had sinned in Adam also, and St. Paul had said in consequence, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one!" The law was given not that we might be saved by obeying it, but that we might know the holiness of God and our own vileness, and that we might understand that we should not be damned for nothing. God would have no quarrelling at His just condemning of us at that day."

This is Bunyan's notion of the position in which we all naturally stand in this world, and from which the substitution of Christ's perfect fulfilment of the law alone rescues us. It is calculated, no doubt, to impress on us a profound horror of moral evil when the penalty attached to it is so fearful. But it is dangerous to introduce into religion metaphysical conceptions of "law." The cord cracks that is strained too tightly; and it is only for brief periods of high spiritual tension that a theology so merciless can sustain itself. No one with a conscience in him will think of claiming any merit for himself. But we know also that there are degrees of demerit, and, theory or no theory, we fall back on the first verse of the English Liturgy, as containing a more durable account of things.

For this reason, among others, Bunyan disliked the Liturgy. He thought the doctrine of it false, and he objected to a Liturgy on principle. He has a sermon on Prayer, in which he insists that to be worth anything prayer must be the expression of an inward feeling; and that people cannot feel in lines laid down for them.

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Forms of prayer he thought especially mischievous to children, as accustoming them to use words to which they attached no meaning.

"My judgment," he says, "is that men go the wrong way to learn their children to pray. It seems to me a better way for people to tell their children betimes what cursed creatures they are, how they are under the wrath of God by reason of original and actual sin; also to tell them the nature of God's wrath and the duration of misery, which, if they would conscientiously do, they would sooner learn their children to pray than they do. The way that men learn to pray is by conviction of sin, and this is the way to make our 'sweet babes' do so too."

"Sweet babes" is unworthy of Bunyan. There is little sweetness in a state of things so stern as he conceives. He might have considered, too, that there was a danger of making children unreal in another and worse sense by teaching them doctrines which neither child nor man can comprehend. It may be true that a single sin may consign me to everlasting hell, but I cannot be made to acknowledge the justice of it. "Wrath of God" and such expressions are out of place when we are brought into the presence of metaphysical laws. Wrath corresponds to free-will misused. It is senseless and extravagant when pronounced against actions which men cannot help, when the faulty action is the necessary consequence of their nature, and the penalty the necessary consequence of the action.

The same confusion of thought lies in the treatment of the kindred subjects of Free-will, Election, and Reprobation. The logic must be maintained, and God's moral attributes simultaneously vindicated. Bunyan argues about

it as ingeniously as Leibnitz himself. Those who suppose that specific guilt attaches to particular acts, that all men are put into the world free to keep the Commandments or to break them, that they are equally able to do one as to do the other, and are, therefore, proper objects of punishment, hold an opinion which is consistent in itself, but is in entire contradiction with facts. Children are not as able to control their inclinations as grown men, and one man is not as able to control himself as another. Some have no difficulty from the first, and are constitutionally good; some are constitutionally weak, or have incurable propensities for evil. Some are brought up with care and insight; others seem never to have any chance at all. So evident is this, that impartial thinkers have questioned the reality of human guilt in the sense in which it is generally understood. Even Butler allows that if we look too curiously we may have a difficulty in finding where it lies. And here, if anywhere, there is a real natural truth in the doctrine of Election, independent of the merit of those who are so happy as to find favor. Bunyan, however, reverses the inference. He will have all guilty together, those who do well and those who do ill. Even the elect are in themselves as badly off as the reprobate, and are equally included under sin. Those who are saved are saved for Christ's merits and not for their own.

Men of calmer temperament accept facts as they find them. They are too conscious of their ignorance to insist on explaining problems which are beyond their reach. Bunyan lived in an age of intense religious excitement, when the strongest minds were exercising themselves on those questions. It is noticeable that the most effective intellects inclined to necessitarian conclusions: some in the shape of Calvinism, some in the corresponding philosophic

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form of Spinozism. From both alike there came an absolute submission to the decrees of God, and a passionate devotion to his service; while the morality of Free-will is cold and calculating. Appeals to a sense of duty do not reach beyond the understanding. The enthusiasm which will stir men's hearts and give them a real power of resisting temptation must be nourished on more invigorating food.

But I need dwell no more on a subject which is unsuited for these pages.

The object of Bunyan, like that of Luther, like that of all great spiritual teachers, was to bring his wandering fellow-mortals into obedience to the commandments, even while he insisted on the worthlessness of it. He sounded the strings to others which had sounded loudest in himself. When he passed from mysticism into matters of ordinary life, he showed the same practical good sense which distinguishes the chief of all this order of thinkers—St. Paul. There is a sermon of Bunyan's on Christian behaviour, on the duties of parents to children, and masters to servants, which might be studied with as much advantage in English households as *The Pilgrim's Progress* itself. To fathers he says, "Take heed that the misdeeds for which thou correctest thy children be not learned them by thee. Many children learn that wickedness of their parents, for which they beat and chastise them. Take heed that thou smile not upon them to encourage them in small faults, lest that thy carriage to them be an encouragement to them to commit greater faults. Take heed that thou use not unsavoury and unseemly words in thy chastising of them, as railing, miscalling, and the like—this is devilish. Take heed that thou do not use them to many chiding words and threatenings, mixed with lightness and laughter. This will harden."

And again : "I tell you that if parents carry it lovingly towards their children, mixing their mercies with loving rebukes, and their loving rebukes with fatherly and motherly compassions, they are more likely to save their children than by being churlish and severe to them. Even if these things do not save them, if their mercy do them no good, yet it will greatly ease them at the day of death to consider, I have done by love as much as I could to save and deliver my child from hell."

Whole volumes on education have said less, or less to the purpose, than these simple words. Unfortunately, parents do not read Bunyan. He is left to children.

Similarly, he says to masters:—

"It is thy duty so to behave thyself to thy servant that thy service may not only be for thy good, but for the good of thy servant, and that in body and soul. Deal with him as to admonition as with thy children. Take heed thou do not turn thy servants into slaves by overcharging them in thy work with thy greediness. Take heed thou carry not thyself to thy servant as he of whom it is said, "He is such a man of Belial that his servants cannot speak to him." The Apostle bids you forbear to threaten them, because you also have a Master in Heaven. Masters, give your servants that which is just, just labour and just wages. Servants that are truly godly care not how cheap they serve their masters, provided they may get into godly families, or where they may be convenient for the Word. But if a master or mistress takes this opportunity to make a prey of their servants, it is abominable. I have heard poor servants say that in some carnal families they have had more liberty to God's things and more fairness of dealing than among many professors. Such masters make religion to stink before the inhabitants of the land."

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Bunyan was generally charitable in his judgment upon others. If there was any exception, it was of professors who discredited their calling by conceit and worldliness.

"No sin," he says, "reigneth more in the world than pride among professors. The thing is too apparent for any man to deny. We may and do see pride display itself in the apparel and carriage of professors almost as much as among any in the land. I have seen church members so decked and bedaubed with their fangles and toys that, when they have been at worship, I have wondered with what faces such painted persons could sit in the place where they were without swooning. I once talked with a maid, by way of reproof for her fond and gaudy garment; she told me the tailor would make it so. Poor proud girl, she gave orders to the tailor to make it so."

I will give one more extract from Bunyan's pastoral addresses. It belongs to a later period in his ministry, when the law had, for a time, remade Dissent into a crime; but it will throw light on the part of his story which we are now approaching, and it is in every way very characteristic of him. He is speaking to sufferers under persecution. He says to them:—

"Take heed of being offended with magistrates, because by their statutes they may cross thy inclinations. It is given to them to bear the sword, and a command is to thee, if thy heart cannot acquiesce with all things, with meekness and patience to suffer. Discontent in the mind sometimes puts discontent into the mouth; and discontent in the mouth doth sometimes also put a halter about thy neck. For as a man speaking a word in jest may for that be hanged in earnest, so he that speaks in discontent may die for it in sober sadness. Above all, get thy conscience possessed more and more with this, that the magistrate is

God's ordinance, and is ordered of God as such; that he is the minister of God to thee for good, and that it is thy duty to fear him and to pray for him; to give thanks to God for him and be subject to him; as both Paul and Peter admonish us; and that not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake. For all other arguments come short of binding the soul when this argument is wanting, until we believe that of God we are bound thereto.

"I speak not these things as knowing any that are disaffected to the government, for I love to be alone, if not with godly men, in things that are convenient. I speak to show my loyalty to the king, and my love to my fellow-subjects, and my desire that all Christians shall walk in ways of peace and truth."

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## CHAPTER V.

### ARREST AND TRIAL.

BUNYAN's preaching enterprise became an extraordinary success. All the Midland Counties heard of his fame, and demanded to hear him. He had been Deacon under Gifford at the Bedford Church; but he was in such request as a preacher, that, in 1657, he was released from his duties there as unable to attend to them. Sects were springing up all over England as weeds in a hot-bed. He was soon in controversy; controversy with Church of England people; controversy with the Ranters, who believed Christ to be a myth; controversy with the Quakers, who, at their outset, disbelieved in his Divinity and in the inspiration of the Scriptures. Envy at his rapidly acquired reputation brought him baser enemies. He was called a witch, a Jesuit, a highwayman. It was reported that he had "his misses," that he had two wives, etc. "My foes have missed their mark in this," he said, with honest warmth: "I am not the man. If all the fornicators and adulterers in England were hanged by the neck, John Bunyan, the object of their envy, would be still alive and well. I know not whether there be such a thing as a woman breathing under the cope of the whole heavens but by their apparel, their children, or common fame, except my wife."

But a more serious trial was now before him. Crom-

well passed away. The Protectorate came to an end. England decided that it had had enough of Puritans and republicans, and would give the Stuarts and the Established Church another trial. A necessary consequence was the revival of the Act of Uniformity. The Independents were not meek like the Baptists, using no weapons to oppose what they disapproved but passive resistance. The same motives which had determined the original constitution of a Church combining the characters of Protestant and Catholic, instead of leaving religion free, were even more powerful at the Restoration than they had been at the accession of Elizabeth. Before toleration is possible, men must have learnt to tolerate toleration itself; and in times of violent convictions, toleration is looked on as indifference, and indifference as Atheism in disguise. Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, regarded one another as enemies of God and the State, with whom no peace was possible. Toleration had been tried by the Valois princes in France. Church and chapel had been the rendezvous of armed fanatics. The preachers blew the war-trumpet, and every town and village had been the scene of furious conflicts, which culminated in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The same result would have followed in England if the same experiment had been ventured. The different communities were forbidden to have their separate places of worship, and services were contrived which moderate men of all sorts could use and interpret after their own convictions. The instrument required to be delicately handled. It succeeded tolerably as long as Elizabeth lived. When Elizabeth died, the balance was no longer fairly kept. The High-Church party obtained the ascendancy, and abused their power. Tyranny brought revolution, and the Catholic element in turn disappeared.

The Bishops were displaced by Presbyterian elders. The Presbyterian elders became in turn "hireling wolves," "old priest" written in new characters. Cromwell had left conscience free to Protestants. But even he had refused equal liberty to Catholics and Episcopilians. He was gone too, and Church and King were back again. How were they to stand? The stern, resolute men, to whom the Commonwealth had been the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth, were as little inclined to keep terms with Antichrist as the Church people had been inclined to keep terms with Cromwell. To have allowed them to meet openly in their conventicles would have been to make over the whole of England to them as a school in which to plant sedition. It was pardonable, it was even necessary, for Charles II. and his advisers to fall back upon Elizabeth's principles, at least as long as the ashes were still glowing. Indulgence had to be postponed till cooler times. With the Fifth Monarchy men abroad, every chapel, except those of the Baptists, would have been a magazine of explosives.

Under the 35th of Elizabeth, Nonconformists refusing to attend worship in the parish churches were to be imprisoned till they made their submission. Three months were allowed them to consider. If at the end of that time they were still obstinate, they were to be banished the realm; and if they subsequently returned to England without permission from the Crown, they were liable to execution as felons. This Act had fallen with the Long Parliament, but at the Restoration it was held to have revived and to be still in force. The parish churches were cleared of their unordained ministers. The Dissenters' chapels were closed. The people were required by proclamation to be present on Sundays in their proper place.

So the majority of the nation had decided. If they had wished for religious liberty they would not have restored the Stuarts, or they would have insisted on conditions, and would have seen that they were observed.

Venner's plot showed the reality of the danger and justified the precaution.

The Baptists and Quakers might have been trusted to discourage violence, but it was impossible to distinguish among the various sects, whose tenets were unknown and even unsettled. The great body of Cromwell's spiritual supporters believed that armed resistance to a government which they disapproved was not only lawful, but was enjoined.

Thus, no sooner was Charles II. on the throne than the Nonconformists found themselves again under bondage. Their separate meetings were prohibited, and they were not only forbidden to worship in their own fashion, but they had to attend church, under penalties. The Bedford Baptists refused to obey. Their meeting-house in the town was shut up, but they continued to assemble in woods and outhouses; Bunyan preaching to them as before, and going to the place in disguise. Informers were soon upon his track. The magistrates had received orders to be vigilant. Bunyan was the most prominent Dissenter in the neighbourhood. He was too sensible to court martyrdom. He had intended to leave the town till more quiet times, and had arranged to meet a few of his people once more to give them a parting address. It was November 12, 1660. The place agreed on was a house in the village of Samsell, near Harlington. Notice of his intention was privately conveyed to Mr. Wingate, a magistrate in the adjoining district. The constables were set to watch the house, and were directed to bring Bunyan before him.

Some member of the congregation heard of it. Bunyan was warned, and was advised to stay at home that night, or else to conceal himself. His departure had been already arranged; but when he learnt that a warrant was actually out against him, he thought that he was bound to stay and face the danger. He was the first Nonconformist who had been marked for arrest. If he flinched after he had been singled out by name, the whole body of his congregation would be discouraged. Go to church he would not, or promise to go to church; but he was willing to suffer whatever punishment the law might order. Thus, at the time and place which had been agreed on, he was in the room at Samsell, with his Bible in his hand, and was about to begin his address, when the constables entered and arrested him. He made no resistance. He desired only to be allowed to say a few words, which the constables permitted. He then prepared to go with them. He was not treated with any roughness. It was too late to take him that night before the magistrate. His friends undertook for his appearance when he should be required, and he went home with them. The constables came for him again on the following afternoon.

Mr. Wingate, when the information was first brought to him, supposed that he had fallen on a nest of Fifth Monarchy men. He enquired, when Bunyan was brought in, how many arms had been found at the meeting. When he learnt that there were no arms, and that it had no political character whatever, he evidently thought it was a matter of no consequence. He told Bunyan that he had been breaking the law, and asked him why he could not attend to his business. Bunyan said that his object in teaching was merely to persuade people to give up their sins. He could do that and attend to his business also.

Wingate answered that the law must be obeyed. He must commit Bunyan for trial at the Quarter Sessions; but he would take bail for him, if his securities would engage that he would not preach again meanwhile. Bunyan refused to be bailed on any such terms. Preach he would and must, and the recognizances would be forfeited. After such an answer, Wingate could only send him to gaol; he could not help himself. The committal was made out, and Bunyan was being taken away, when two of his friends met him, who were acquainted with Wingate, and they begged the constable to wait. They went in to the magistrate. They told him who and what Bunyan was. The magistrate had not the least desire to be hard, and it was agreed that if he would himself give some general promise of a vague kind he might be let go altogether. Bunyan was called back. Another magistrate who knew him had by this time joined Wingate. They both said that they were reluctant to send him to prison. If he would promise them that he would not call the people together any more, he might go home.

They had purposely chosen a form of words which would mean as little as possible. But Bunyan would not accept an evasion. He said that he would not force the people to come together, but if he was in a place where the people were met, he should certainly speak to them. The magistrate repeated that the meetings were unlawful. They would be satisfied if Bunyan would simply promise that he would not call such meetings. It was as plain as possible that they wished to dismiss the case, and they were thrusting words into his mouth which he could use without a mental reservation; but he persisted that there were many ways in which a meeting might be called; if people came together to hear him, knowing that

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he would speak, he might be said to have called them together.

Remonstrances and entreaties were equally useless, and, with extreme unwillingness, they committed him to Bedford gaol to wait for the sessions.

It is not for us to say that Bunyan was too precise. He was himself the best judge of what his conscience and his situation required. To himself, at any rate, his trial was at the moment most severe. He had been left a widower a year or two before, with four young children, one of them blind. He had lately married a second time. His wife was pregnant. The agitation at her husband's arrest brought on premature labour, and she was lying in his house in great danger. He was an affectionate man, and the separation at such a time was peculiarly distressing. After some weeks the Quarter Sessions came on. Bunyan was indicted under the usual form, that he, "being a person of such and such condition, had, since such a time, devilishly and pertinaciously abstained from coming to church to hear Divine service, and was a common upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our Sovereign Lord the King."

There seems to have been a wish to avoid giving him a formal trial. He was not required to plead, and it may have been thought that he had been punished sufficiently. He was asked why he did not go to church? He said that the Prayer-book was made by man; he was ordered in the Bible to pray with the spirit and the understanding, not with the spirit and the Prayer-book. The magistrates, referring to another Act of Parliament, cautioned Bunyan against finding fault with the Prayer-book, or he would

bring himself into further trouble. Justice Keelin, who presided, said (so Bunyan declares, and it has been the standing jest of his biographers ever since) that the Prayer-book had been in use ever since the Apostles' time. Perhaps the words were that parts of it had been then in use (the Apostles' Creed, for instance), and thus they would have been strictly true. However this might be, they told him kindly, as Mr. Wingate had done, that it would be better for him if he would keep to his proper work. The law had prohibited conventicles. He might teach, if he pleased, in his own family and among his friends. He must not call large numbers of people together. He was as impracticable as before, and the magistrates, being but unregenerate mortals, may be pardoned if they found him provoking. If, he said, it was lawful for him to do good to a few, it must be equally lawful to do good to many. He had a gift, which he was bound to use. If it was sinful for men to meet together to exhort one another to follow Christ, he should sin still.

He was compelling the Court to punish him, whether they wished it or not. He describes the scene as if the choice had rested with the magistrates to convict him or to let him go. If he was bound to do his duty, they were equally bound to do theirs. They took his answers as a plea of guilty to the indictment, and Justice Keelin, who was chairman, pronounced his sentence in the terms of the Act. He was to go to prison for three months; if, at the end of three months, he still refused to conform, he was to be transported; and if he came back without license he would be hanged. Bunyan merely answered, "If I were out of prison to-day, I would preach the Gospel again to-morrow." More might have followed, but the gaoler led him away."

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There were three gaols in Bedford, and no evidence has been found to show in which of the three Bunyan was confined. Two of them, the county gaol and the town gaol, were large, roomy buildings. Tradition has chosen the third, a small lock-up, fourteen feet square, which stood over the river between the central arches of the old bridge ; and as it appears from the story that he had at times fifty or sixty fellow-prisoners, and as he admits himself that he was treated at first with exceptional kindness, it may be inferred that tradition, in selecting the prison on the bridge, was merely desiring to exhibit the sufferings of the Non-conformist martyr in a sensational form, and that he was never in this prison at all. When it was pulled down in 1811, a gold ring was found in the rubbish, with the initials "J. B." upon it. This is one of the "trifles light as air" which carry conviction to the "jealous" only, and is too slight a foundation on which to assert a fact so inherently improbable.

When the three months were over, the course of law would have brought him again to the bar, when he would have had to choose between conformity and exile. There was still the same desire to avoid extremities, and as the day approached, the clerk of the peace was sent to persuade him into some kind of compliance. Various insurrections had broken out since his arrest, and must have shown him, if he could have reflected, that there was real reason for the temporary enforcement of the Act. He was not asked to give up preaching. He was asked only to give up public preaching. It was well known that he had no disposition to rebellion. Even the going to church was not insisted on. The clerk of the peace told him that he might "exhort his neighbours in private discourse," if only he would not bring the people together in numbers,

which the magistrates would be bound to notice. In this way he might continue his usefulness, and would not be interfered with.

Bunyan knew his own freedom from seditious intentions. He would not see that the magistrates could not suspend the law and make an exception in his favour. They were going already to the utmost limit of indulgence. But the more he disapproved of rebellion, the more punctilious he was in carrying out resistance of another kind which he held to be legitimate. He was a representative person, and he thought that in yielding he would hurt the cause of religious liberty. "The law," he said, "had provided two ways of obeying—one to obey actively, and if he could not in conscience obey actively, then to suffer whatever penalty was inflicted on him."

The clerk of the peace could produce no effect. Bunyan rather looked on him as a false friend trying to entangle him. The three months elapsed, and the magistrates had to determine what was to be done. If Bunyan was brought before them, they must exile him. His case was passed over and he was left in prison, where his wife and children were allowed to visit him daily. He did not understand the law or appreciate their forbearance. He exaggerated his danger. At the worst he could only have been sent to America, where he might have remained as long as he pleased. He feared that he might perhaps be hanged.

"I saw what was coming," he said, "and had two considerations especially on my heart—how to be able to endure, should my imprisonment be long and tedious, and how to be able to encounter death should that be my portion. I was made to see that if I would suffer rightly, I must pass sentence of death upon everything that can properly be

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called a thing of this life, even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments all as dead to me, and myself as dead to them. Yet I was a man compassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place (the prison in which he was writing) as the pulling of my flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am too, too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow on thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children. Yet, thought I, I must do it—I must do it. I had this for consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments. Also, I had dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of that for fear of the cross do shrink from their profession. I had this much upon my spirit, that my imprisonment might end in the gallows for aught I could tell. In the condition I now was in I was not fit to die, nor indeed did I think I could if I should be called to it. I feared I might show a weak heart, and give occasion to the enemy. This lay with great trouble on me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees for such a cause as this. The things of God were kept out of my sight. The tempter followed me with, ‘But whither

must you go when you die? What will become of you? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified?" Thus was I tossed many weeks; but I felt it was for the Word and way of God that I was in this condition. God might give me comfort or not as He pleased. I was bound, but He was free—yea, it was my duty to stand to His Word, whether He would ever look upon me or no, or save me at the last. Wherefore, thought I, the point being thus, I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no. If God does not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blind-fold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Now was my heart full of comfort."

The ladder was an imaginary ladder, but the resolution was a genuine manly one, such as lies at the bottom of all brave and honourable action. Others who have thought very differently from Bunyan about such matters have felt the same as he felt. Be true to yourself, whatever comes, even if damnation come. Better hell with an honest heart, than heaven with cowardice and insincerity. It was the more creditable to Bunyan, too, because the spectres and hobgoblins had begun occasionally to revisit him.

"Of all temptations I ever met with in my life," he says, "to question the being of God and the truth of His Gospel is the worst, and worst to be borne. When this temptation comes, it takes my girdle from me, and removes the foundation from under me. Though God has visited my soul with never so blessed a discovery of Himself, yet afterwards I have been in my spirit so filled with darkness, that I could not so much as once conceive what that God and that comfort was with which I had been refreshed."

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE BEDFORD GAOL.

THE irregularities in the proceedings against Bunyan had perhaps been suggested by the anticipation of the general pardon which was expected in the following spring. At the coronation of Charles, April 23, 1661, an order was issued for the release of prisoners who were in gaol for any offences short of felony. Those who were waiting their trials were to be let go at once. Those convicted and under sentence might sue out a pardon under the Great Seal at any time within a year from the proclamation. Was Bunyan legally convicted or not? He had not pleaded directly to the indictment. No evidence had been heard against him. His trial had been a conversation between himself and the Court. The point had been raised by his friends. His wife had been in London to make interest for him, and a peer had presented a petition in Bunyan's behalf in the House of Lords. The judges had been directed to look again into the matter at the midsummer assizes. The high-sheriff was active in Bunyan's favour. The Judges Twisden, Chester, and no less a person than Sir Matthew Hale, appear to have concluded that his conviction was legal, that he could not be tried again, and that he must apply for pardon in the regular way. His wife, however, at the instance of the sheriff,

obtained a hearing, and they listened courteously to what she had to say. When she had done, Mr. Justice Twisden put the natural question, whether, if her husband was released, he would refrain from preaching in public for the future. If he intended to repeat his offence immediately that he was at liberty, his liberty would only bring him into a worse position. The wife at once said that he dared not leave off preaching as long as he could speak. The judge asked if she thought her husband was to be allowed to do as he pleased. She said that he was a peaceable person, and wished only to be restored to a position in which he could maintain his family. They had four small children who could not help themselves, one of them being blind, and they had nothing to live upon as long as her husband was in prison but the charity of their friends. Hale remarked that she looked very young to have four children. "I am but mother-in-law to them," she said, "having not been married yet full two years. I was with child when my husband was first apprehended, but being young, I being dismayed at the news fell in labour, and so continued for eight days. I was delivered, but my child died."

Hale was markedly kind. He told her that, as the conviction had been recorded, they could not set it aside. She might sue out a pardon if she pleased, or she might obtain "a writ of error," which would be simple and less expensive.

She left the court in tears—tears, however, which were not altogether tears of suffering innocence. "It was not so much," she said, "because they were so hardhearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures would have to give at the coming of the Lord." No doubt both Bunyan and she

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thought themselves cruelly injured, and they confounded the law with the administration of it. Persons better informed than they often choose to forget that judges are sworn to administer the law which they find, and rail at them as if the sentences which they are obliged by their oaths to pass were their own personal acts.

A pardon, it cannot be too often said, would have been of no use to Bunyan, because he was determined to persevere in disobeying a law which he considered to be unjust. The most real kindness which could be shown to him was to leave him where he was. His imprisonment was intended to be little more than nominal. His gaoler, not certainly without the sanction of the sheriff, let him go where he pleased; once even so far as London. He used his liberty as he had declared that he would. "I followed my wonted course of preaching," he says, "taking all occasions that were put in my hand to visit the people of God." This was deliberate defiance. The authorities saw that he must be either punished in earnest, or the law would fall into contempt. He admitted that he expected to be "roundly dealt with." His indulgences were withdrawn, and he was put into close confinement.

Sessions now followed sessions, and assizes, assizes. His detention was doubtless irregular, for by law he should have been sent beyond the seas. He petitioned to be brought to trial again, and complained loudly that his petition was not listened to; but no legislator, in framing an Act of Parliament, ever contemplated an offender in so singular a position. Bunyan was simply trying his strength against the Crown and Parliament. The judges and magistrates respected his character, and were unwilling to drive him out of the country; he had himself no wish for liberty on that condition. The only resource,

therefore, was to prevent him forcibly from repeating an offence that would compel them to adopt harsh measures which they were so earnestly trying to avoid.

Such was the world-famous imprisonment of John Bunyan, which has been the subject of so much eloquent declamation. It lasted in all for more than twelve years. It might have ended at any time if he would have promised to confine his addresses to a private circle. It did end after six years. He was released under the first declaration of indulgence; but as he instantly recommenced his preaching, he was arrested again. Another six years went by; he was again let go, and was taken once more immediately after, preaching in a wood. This time he was detained but a few months, and in form more than reality. The policy of the government was then changed, and he was free for the rest of his life.

His condition during his long confinement has furnished a subject for pictures which if correct would be extremely affecting. It is true that, being unable to attend to his usual business, he spent his unoccupied hours in making tags for boot-laces. With this one fact to build on, and with the assumption that the scene of his sufferings was the Bridge Lockhouse, Nonconformist imagination has drawn a "den" for us, "where there was not a yard or a court to walk in for daily exercise;" "a damp and dreary ~~cold~~;" "a narrow chink which admits a few scanty rays of light to render visible the abode of woe;" "the prisoner, pale and emaciated, seated on the humid earth, pursuing his daily task, to earn the morsel which prolongs his existence and his confinement together. Near him, reclining in pensive sadness, his blind daughter, five other distressed children, and an affectionate wife, whom pinching want and grief have worn down to the gate of death. Ten

summer suns have rolled over the mansion of his misery whose reviving rays have never once penetrated his sad abode," &c., &c.

If this description resembles or approaches the truth, I can but say that to have thus abandoned to want their most distinguished pastor and his family was intensely discreditable to the Baptist community. English prisons in the seventeenth century were not models of good management. But prisoners, whose friends could pay for them, were not consigned to damp and dreary cells; and in default of evidence of which not a particle exists, I cannot charge so reputable a community with a neglect so scandalous. The entire story is in itself incredible. Bunyan was prosperous in his business. He was respected and looked up to by a large and growing body of citizens, including persons of wealth and position in London. He was a representative sufferer fighting the battle of all the Nonconformists in England. He had active supporters in the town of Bedford and among the gentlemen of the county. The authorities, so far as can be inferred from their actions, tried from the first to deal as gently with him as he would allow them to do. Is it conceivable that the Baptists would have left his family to starve; or that his own confinement would have been made so absurdly and needlessly cruel? Is it not far more likely that he found all the indulgences which money could buy and the rules of the prison would allow? Bunyan is not himself responsible for these wild legends. Their real character appears more clearly when we observe how he was occupied during these years.

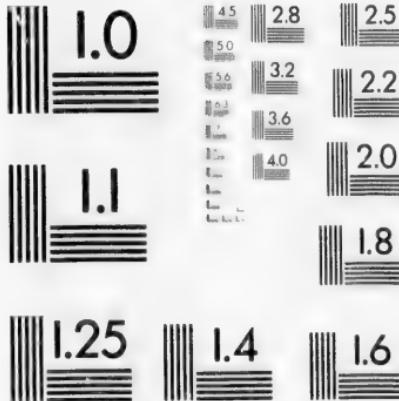
Friends, in the first place, had free access to him, and strangers who were drawn to him by reputation; while the gaol was considered a private place, and he was al-





## MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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lowed to preach there, at least occasionally, to his fellow-prisoners. Charles Doe, a distinguished Nonconformist, visited him in his confinement, and has left an account of what he saw. "When I was there," he writes, "there were about sixty dissenters besides himself, taken but a little before at a religious meeting at Kaistor, in the county of Bedford, besides two eminent dissenting ministers, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Dun, by which means the prison was much crowded. Yet, in the midst of all that hurry, I heard Mr. Bunyan both preach and pray with that mighty spirit of faith and plerophory of Divine assistance, that he made me stand and wonder. Here they could sing without fear of being overheard, no informers prowling round, and the world shut out."

This was not all. A fresh and more severe Conventicle Act was passed in 1670. Attempts were made to levy fines in the town of Bedford. There was a riot there. The local officers refused to assist in quelling it. The shops were shut. Bedford was occupied by soldiers. Yet, at this very time, Bunyan was again allowed to go abroad through general connivance. He spent his nights with his family. He even preached now and then in the woods. Once, when he had intended to be out for the night, information was given to a clerical magistrate in the neighbourhood, who disliked him, and a constable was sent to ascertain if the prisoners were all within ward. Bunyan had received a hint of what was coming. He was in his place when the constable came; and the governor of the gaol is reported to have said to him, "You may go out when you please, for you know better when to return than I can tell you." Parliament might pass laws, but the execution of them depended on the local authorities. Before the Declaration of Indulgence, the

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Baptist church in Bedford was reopened. Bunyan, while still nominally in confinement, attended its meetings. In 1671 he became an Elder; in December of that year he was chosen Pastor. The question was raised whether, as a prisoner, he was eligible. The objection would not have been set aside had he been unable to undertake the duties of the office. These facts prove conclusively that, for a part at least of the twelve years, the imprisonment was little more than formal. He could not have been in the Bridge gaol when he had sixty fellow-prisoners, and was able to preach to them in private. It is unlikely that at any time he was made to suffer any greater hardships than were absolutely inevitable.

But whether Bunyan's confinement was severe or easy, it was otherwise of inestimable value to him. It gave him leisure to read and reflect. Though he preached often, yet there must have been intervals, perhaps long intervals, of compulsory silence. The excitement of perpetual speech-making is fatal to the exercise of the higher qualities. The periods of calm enabled him to discover powers in himself of which he might otherwise have never known the existence. Of books he had but few; for a time only the Bible and Foxe's *Martyrs*. But the Bible thoroughly known is a literature of itself—the rarest and richest in all departments of thought or imagination which exists. Foxe's *Martyrs*, if he had a complete edition of it, would have given him a very adequate knowledge of history. With those two books he had no cause to complain of intellectual destitution. He must have read more, however. He knew George Herbert—perhaps Spenser—perhaps *Paradise Lost*. But of books, except of the Bible, he was at no time a great student. Happily for himself, he had no other book of Divinity, and he needed none.

His real study was human life as he had seen it, and the human heart as he had experienced the workings of it. Though he never mastered successfully the art of verse, he had other gifts which belong to a true poet. He had imagination, if not of the highest, yet of a very high order. He had infinite inventive humor, tenderness, and, better than all, powerful masculine sense. To obtain the use of these faculties he needed only composure, and this his imprisonment secured for him. He had published several theological compositions before his arrest, which have relatively little value. Those which he wrote in prison—even on theological subjects—would alone have made him a reputation as a Nonconformist divine. In no other writings are the peculiar views of Evangelical Calvinism brought out more clearly, or with a more heartfelt conviction of their truth. They have furnished an arsenal from which English Protestant divines have ever since equipped themselves. The most beautiful of them, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, is his own spiritual biography, which contains the account of his early history. The first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was composed there as an amusement. To this, and to his other works which belong to literature, I shall return in a future chapter.

Visitors who saw him in the gaol found his manner and presence as impressive as his writings. "He was mild and affable in conversation," says one of them, "not given to loquacity or to much discourse, unless some urgent occasion required. It was observed he never spoke of himself or of his talents, but seemed low in his own eyes. He was never heard to reproach or revile any, whatever injury he received, but rather rebuked those who did so. He managed all things with such exactness as if he had made it his study not to give off . . ."

The final *Declaration of Indulgence* came at last, bringing with it the privilege for which Bunyan had fought and suffered. Charles II. cared as little for liberty as his father or his brother, but he wished to set free the Catholics, and as a step towards it he conceded a general toleration to the Protestant Dissenters. Within two years of the passing of the Conventicle Act of 1670, this and every other penal law against Nonconformists was suspended. They were allowed to open their "meeting-houses" for "worship and devotion," subject only to a few easy conditions. The localities were to be specified in which chapels were required, and the ministers were to receive their licenses from the Crown. To prevent suspicions, the Roman Catholics were for the present excluded from the benefit of the concession. Mass could be said, as before, only in private houses. A year later, the Proclamation was confirmed by Act of Parliament.

Thus Bunyan's long imprisonment was ended. The cause was won. He had been its foremost representative and champion, and was one of the first persons to receive the benefit of the change of policy. He was now forty-four years old. The order for his release was signed on May 8, 1672. His license as pastor of the Baptist chapel at Bedford was issued on the 9th. He established himself in a small house in the town. "When he came abroad," says one, "he found his temporal affairs were gone to wreck, and he had, as to them, to begin again as if he had newly come into the world. But yet he was not destitute of friends who had all along supported him with necessities, and had been very good to his family; so that by their assistance, getting things a little about him again, he resolved, as much as possible, to decline worldly business, and give himself wholly up to the service of God." As

much as possible; but not entirely. In 1685, being afraid of a return of persecution, he made over, as a precaution, his whole estate to his wife: "All and singular his goods, chattels, debts, ready money, plate, rings, household stuff, apparel, utensils, brass, pewter, bedding, and all his other substance." In this deed he still describes himself as a brazier. The language is that of a man in easy, if not ample, circumstances. "Though, by reason of losses which he sustained by imprisonment," says another biographer, "his treasures swelled not to excess, he always had sufficient to live decently and creditably." His writings and his sufferings had made him famous throughout England. He became the actual head of the Baptist community. Men called him, half in irony, half in seriousness, Bishop Bunyan, and he passed the rest of his life honourably and innocently, occupied in writing, preaching, district visiting, and opening daughter churches. Happy in his work, happy in the sense that his influence was daily extending—spreading over his own country, and to the far-off settlements in America, he spent his last years in his own Land of Beulah, Doubting Castle out of sight, and the towers and minarets of Emmanuel Land growing nearer and clearer as the days went on.

He had not detected, or at least, at first, he did not detect, the sinister purpose which lay behind the Indulgence. The exception of the Roman Catholics gave him perfect confidence in the Government, and after his release he published a *Discourse upon Antichrist*, with a preface, in which he credited Charles with the most righteous intentions, and urged his countrymen to be loyal and faithful to him. His object in writing it, he said, "was to testify his loyalty to the King, his love to the brethren, and his service to his country." Antichrist was, of course, the

Pope, the deadliest of all enemies to vital Christianity. To its kings and princes England owed its past deliverance from him. To kings England must look for his final overthrow.

"As the noble King Henry VIII. did cast down the Antichristian worship, so he cast down the laws that held it up; so also did the good King Edward, his son. The brave Queen Elizabeth, also, the sister of King Edward, left of things of this nature, to her lasting fame, behind her." Cromwell he dared not mention—perhaps he did not wish to mention him. But he evidently believed that there was better hope in Charles Stuart than in conspiracy and revolution.

"Kings," he said, "must be the men that shall down with Antichrist, and they shall down with her in God's time. God hath begun to draw the hearts of some of them from her already, and He will set them in time against her round about. If, therefore, they do not that work so fast as we would have them, let us exercise patience and hope in God. 'Tis a wonder they go as fast as they do, since the concerns of whole kingdoms lie upon their shoulders, and there are so many Sanballats and Tobias's to flatter them and misinform them. Let the King have visibly a place in your hearts, and with heart and mouth give God thanks for him. He is a better Saviour of us than we may be aware of, and hath delivered us from more deaths than we can tell how to think. We are bidden to give God thanks for all men, and in the first place for kings, and all that are in authority. Be not angry with them—no, not in thy thought. But consider, if they go not in the work of Reformation so fast as thou wouldest they should, the fault may be thine. Know that thou also hast thy cold and chill frames of heart, and sit-

test still when thou shouldest be up and doing. Pray for the long life of the King. Pray that God would give wisdom and judgment to the King; pray that God would discern all plots and conspiracies against his person and government. I do confess myself one of the old-fashioned professors that wish to fear God and honour the King. I am also for blessing them that curse me, for doing good to them that hate me, and for praying for them that despitefully use me and persecute me; and I have had more peace in the practice of these things than all the world are aware of."

The Stuarts, both Charles and James, were grateful for Bunyan's services. The Nonconformists generally went up and down in Royal favour; lost their privileges and regained them as their help was needed or could be dispensed with. But Bunyan was never more molested. He did what he liked. He preached where he pleased, and no one troubled him or called him to account. He was not insincere. His constancy in enduring so long an imprisonment which a word from him would have ended, lifts him beyond the reach of unworthy suspicions. But he disapproved always of violent measures. His rule was to submit to the law; and where, as he said, he could not obey actively, then to bear with patience the punishment that might be inflicted on him. Perhaps he really hoped, as long as hope was possible, that good might come out of the Stuarts.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### LIFE AND DEATH OF MR. BADMAN.

To his contemporaries Bunyan was known as the Nonconformist Martyr, and the greatest living Protestant preacher. To us he is mainly interesting through his writings, and especially through *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Although he possessed in a remarkable degree the gift of expressing himself in written words, he had himself no value for literature. He cared simply for spiritual truth, and literature in his eyes was only useful as a means of teaching it. Every thing with which a reasonable man could concern himself was confined within the limits of Christian faith and practice. Ambition was folly. Amusement was idle trifling in a life so short as man's, and with issues so far-reaching depending upon it. To understand, and to make others understand, what Christ had done, and what Christ required men to do, was the occupation of his whole mind, and no object ever held his attention except in connection with it. With a purpose so strict, and a theory of religion so precise, there is usually little play for imagination or feeling. Though we read Protestant theology as a duty, we find it as dry in the mouth as sawdust. The literature which would please must represent nature, and nature refuses to be bound into our dogmatic systems. No object can be pictured truly, except by a mind which has sympathy with it. Shakspeare no more hates Iago

than Iago hates himself. He allows Iago to exhibit himself in his own way, as nature does. Every character, if justice is to be done to it, must be painted at its best, as it appears to itself; and a man impressed deeply with religious convictions is generally incapable of the sympathy which would give him an insight into what he disapproves and dislikes. And yet Bunyan, intensely religious as he was, and narrow as his theology was, is always human. His genius remains fresh and vigorous under the least promising conditions. All mankind being under sin together, he has no favourites to flatter, no opponents to misrepresent. There is a kindness in his descriptions even of the Evil One's attacks upon himself.

*The Pilgrim's Progress*, though professedly an allegoric story of the Protestant plan of salvation, is conceived in the large, wide spirit of humanity itself. Anglo-Catholic and Lutheran, Calvinist and Deist can alike read it with delight, and find their own theories in it. Even the Romanist has only to blot out a few paragraphs, and can discover no purer model of a Christian life to place in the hands of his children. The religion of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the religion which must be always and everywhere, as long as man believes that he has a soul and is responsible for his actions; and thus it is that, while theological folios once devoured as manna from Heaven now lie on the bookshelves dead as Egyptian mummies, this book is wrought into the mind and memory of every well-conditioned English or American child; while the matured man, furnished with all the knowledge which literature can teach him, still finds the adventures of Christian as charming as the adventures of Ulysses or Æneas. He sees there the reflexion of himself, the familiar features of his own nature, which remain the same from era to era. Time

cannot impair its interest, or intellectual progress make it cease to be true to experience.

But *The Pilgrim's Progress*, though the best known, is not the only work of imagination which Bunyan produced; he wrote another religious allegory, which Lord Macaulay thought would have been the best of its kind in the world if *The Pilgrim's Progress* had not existed. The *Life of Mr. Badman*, though now scarcely read at all, contains a vivid picture of rough English life in the days of Charles II. Bunyan was a poet, too, in the technical sense of the word; and though he disclaimed the name, and though rhyme and metre were to him as Saul's armour to David, the fine quality of his mind still shows itself in the uncongenial accoutrements.

It has been the fashion to call Bunyan's verse doggerel; but no verse is doggerel which has a sincere and rational meaning in it. Goethe, who understood his own trade, says that the test of poetry is the substance which remains when the poetry is reduced to prose. Bunyan had infinite invention. His mind was full of objects which he had gathered at first-hand, from observation and reflection. He had excellent command of the English language, and could express what he wished with sharp, defined outlines, and without the waste of a word. The rhythmical structure of his prose is carefully correct. Scarcely a syllable is ever out of place. His ear for verse, though less true, is seldom wholly at fault, and, whether in prose or verse, he had the superlative merit that he could never write nonsense. If one of the motives of poetical form be to clothe thought and feeling in the dress in which it can be most easily remembered, Bunyan's lines are often as successful as the best lines of Quarles or George Herbert. Who, for instance, could forget these?—

"Sin is the worm of hell, the lasting fire;  
 Hell would soon lose its heat should sin expire;  
 Better sinless in hell than to be where  
 Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there."

Or these, on persons whom the world calls men of spirit:—

"Though you dare crack a coward's crown,  
 Or quarrel for a pin,  
 You dare not on the wicked frown,  
 Or speak against their sin."

The *Book of Ruth* and the *History of Joseph*, done into blank verse, are really beautiful idylls. The substance with which he worked, indeed, is so good that there would be a difficulty in spoiling it completely; but the prose of the translation in the English Bible, faultless as it is, loses nothing in Bunyan's hands, and if we found these poems in the collected works of a poet laureate, we should consider that a difficult task had been accomplished successfully. Bunyan felt, like the translators of the preceding century, that the text was sacred, that his duty was to give the exact meaning of it, without epithets or ornaments, and thus the original grace is completely preserved.

Of a wholly different kind, and more after Quarles's manner, is a collection of thoughts in verse, which he calls a book for boys and girls. All his observations ran naturally in one direction; to minds possessed and governed by religion, nature—be their creed what it may—is always a parable reflecting back their own views.

But how neatly expressed are these *Meditations upon an Egg*:—

"The egg's no chick by falling from a hen,  
 Nor man's a Christian till 's born again;

The egg's at first contained in the shell,  
Men afore grace in sin and darkness dwell ;  
The egg, when laid, by warmth is made a chicken,  
And Christ by grace the dead in sin doth quicken ;  
The egg when first a chick the shell's its prison,  
So flesh to soul who yet with Christ is risen."

Or this, *On a Swallow* :—

" This pretty bird ! Oh, how she flies and sings ;  
But could she do so if she had not wings ?  
Her wings bespeak my faith, her songs my peace ;  
When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease.

Though the Globe Theatre was, in the opinion of Non-conformists, "the heart of Satan's empire," Bunyan must yet have known something of Shakspeare. In the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* we find :—

" Who would true valour see,  
Let him come hither ;  
One here will constant be,  
Come wind, come weather."

The resemblance to the song in *As You Like It* is too near to be accidental :—

" Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to be in the sun ;  
Seeking the food he eats,  
And pleased with what he gets,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither.  
Here shall be no enemy,  
Save winter and rough weather."

Bunyan may, perhaps, have heard the lines, and the rhymes may have clung to him without his knowing whence they came. But he would never have been heard of outside his own communion, if his imagination had found no better form of expression for itself than verse.

His especial gift was for allegory, the single form of imaginative fiction which he would not have considered trivial, and his especial instrument was plain, unaffected Saxon prose. *The Holy War* is a people's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* in one. The *Life of Mr. Badman* is a didactic tale, describing the career of a vulgar, middle-class, unprincipled scoundrel.

These are properly Bunyan's "works," the results of his life, so far as it affects the present generation of Englishmen; and as they are little known, I shall give an account of each of them.

The *Life of Badman* is presented as a dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. Mr. Wiseman tells the story, Mr. Attentive comments upon it. The names recall Bunyan's well-known manner. The figures stand for typical characters; but as the *dramatis personae* of many writers of fiction, while professing to be beings of flesh and blood, are no more than shadows, so Bunyan's shadows are solid men, whom we can feel and handle.

Mr. Badman is, of course, one of the "reprobate." Bunyan considered theoretically that a reprobate may outwardly appear to have the graces of a saint, and that there may be little in his conduct to mark his true character. A reprobate may be sorry for his sins, he may repent and lead a good life. He may reverence good men, and may try to resemble them; he may pray, and his prayers may be answered; he may have the spirit of God, and may receive another heart, and yet he may be under the covenant of works, and may be eternally lost. This Bunyan could say while he was writing theology; but art has its rules as well as its more serious sister, and when he had to draw a living specimen, he drew him as he had seen him in his own Bedford neighbourhood.

Badman showed from childhood a propensity for evil. He was so "addicted to lying that his parents could not distinguish when he was speaking the truth. He would invent, tell, and stand to the lies which he invented, with such an audacious face, that one might read in his very countenance the symptoms of a hard and desperate heart. It was not the fault of his parents; they were much dejected at the beginnings of their son; nor did he want counsel and correction, if that would have made him better; but all availed nothing."

Lying was not Badman's only fault. He took to pilfering and stealing. He robbed his neighbours' orchards. He picked up money if he found it lying about. Especially, Mr. Wiseman notes that he hated Sundays. "Reading Scriptures, godly conferences, repeating of sermons and prayers, were things that he could not away with." "He was an enemy to that day, because more restraint was laid upon him from his own ways than was possible on any other." Mr. Wiseman never doubts that the Puritan Sunday ought to have been appreciated by little boys. If a child disliked it, the cause could only be his own wickedness. Young Badman "was greatly given also to swearing and cursing." "He made no more of it" than Mr. Wiseman made "of telling his fingers." "He counted it a glory to swear and curse, and it was as natural to him as to eat, drink, or sleep." Bunyan, in this description, is supposed to have taken the picture from himself. But too much may be made of this. He was thinking, perhaps, of what he might have been if God's grace had not preserved him. He himself was saved. Badman is represented as given over from the first. Anecdotes, however, are told of contemporary providential judgments upon swearers, which had much impressed Bunyan. One was of

a certain Dorothy Mately, a woman whose business was to wash rubbish at the Derby lead-mines. Dorothy (it was in the year when Bunyan was first imprisoned) had stolen twopence from the coat of a boy who was working near her. When the boy taxed her with having robbed him, she wished the ground might swallow her up if she had ever touched his money. Presently after, some children, who were watching her, saw a movement in the bank on which she was standing. They called to her to take care, but it was too late. The bank fell in, and she was carried down along with it. A man ran to help her, but the sides of the pit were crumbling round her; a large stone fell on her head; the rubbish followed, and she was overwhelmed. When she was dug out afterwards, the pence were found in her pocket. Bunyan was perfectly satisfied that her death was supernatural. To discover miracles is not peculiar to Catholics. They will be found wherever there is an active belief in immediate providential government.

Those more cautious in forming their conclusions will think, perhaps, that the woman was working above some shaft in the mine, that the crust had suddenly broken, and that it would equally have fallen in, when gravitation required it to fall, if Dorothy Mately had been a saint. They will remember the words about the Tower of Siloam. But to return to Badman.

His father, being unable to manage so unpromising a child, bound him out as an apprentice. The master to whom he was assigned was as good a man as the father could find: upright, God-fearing, and especially considerate of his servants. He never worked them too hard. He left them time to read and pray. He admitted no light or mischievous books within his doors. He was not one of those whose religion "hung as a cloke in his house, and

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was never seen on him when he went abroad." His household was as well fed and cared for as himself, and he required nothing of others of which he did not set them an example in his own person.

This man did his best to reclaim young Badman, and was particularly kind to him. But his exertions were thrown away. The good-for-nothing youth read filthy romances on the sly. He fell asleep in church, or made eyes at the pretty girls. He made acquaintance with low companions. He became profligate, got drunk at ale-houses, sold his master's property to get money, or stole it out of the cash-box. Thrice he ran away and was taken back again. The third time he was allowed to go. "The House of Correction would have been the most fit for him, but thither his master was loath to send him, for the love he bore his father."

He was again apprenticed; this time to a master like himself. Being wicked, he was given over to wickedness. The ways of it were not altogether pleasant. He was fed worse and he was worked harder than he had been before; when he stole, or neglected his business, he was beaten. He liked his new place, however, better than the old. "At least, there was no godliness in the house, which he hated worst of all."

So far, Bunyan's hero was travelling the usual road of the Idle Apprentice, and the gallows would have been the commonplace ending of it. But this would not have answered Bunyan's purpose. He wished to represent the good-for-nothing character, under the more instructive aspect of worldly success, which bad men may arrive at as well as good, if they are prudent and cunning. Bunyan gives his hero every chance. He submits him from the first to the best influences; he creates opportunities for re-

pentance at every stage of a long career—opportunities which the reprobate nature cannot profit by, yet increases its guilt by neglecting.

Badman's term being out, his father gives him money and sets him up as a tradesman on his own account. Mr. Attentive considers this to have been a mistake. Mr. Wiseman answers that, even in the most desperate cases, kindness in parents is more likely to succeed than severity, and, if it fails, they will have the less to reproach themselves with. The kindness is, of course, thrown away. Badman continues a loose blackguard, extravagant, idle, and dissolute. He comes to the edge of ruin. His situation obliges him to think; and now the interest of the story begins. He must repair his fortune by some means or other. The easiest way is by marriage. There was a young orphan lady in the neighbourhood, who was well off and her own mistress. She was a "professor," eagerly given to religion, and not so wise as she ought to have been. Badman pretends to be converted. He reforms, or seems to reform. He goes to meeting, sings hymns, adopts the most correct form of doctrine, tells the lady that he does not want her money, but that he wants a companion who will go with him along the road to Heaven. He was plausible, good-looking, and, to all appearance, as absorbed as herself in the one thing needful. The congregation warn her, but to no purpose. She marries him, and finds what she has done too late. In her fortune he has all that he wanted. He swears at her, treats her brutally, brings prostitutes into his house, laughs at her religion, and at length orders her to give it up. When she refuses, Bunyan introduces a special feature of the times, and makes Badman threaten to turn informer, and bring her favourite minister to gaol. The informers were the natu-

ral but most accursed products of the Conventicle Acts. Popular abhorrence relieved itself by legends of the dreadful judgments which had overtaken these wretches.

In St. Neots an informer was bitten by a dog. The wound gangrened, and the flesh rotted off his bones. In Bedford "there was one W. S." (Bunyan probably knew him too well), "a man of very wicked life, and he, when there seemed to be countenance given it, would needs turn informer. Well, so he did, and was as diligent in his business as most of them could be. He would watch at nights, climb trees, and range the woods of days, if possible to find out the meeters, for then they were forced to meet in the fields. Yea, he would curse them bitterly, and swore most fearfully what he would do to them when he found them. Well, after he had gone on like a Bedlam in his course awhile, and had done some mischief to the people, he was stricken by the hand of God. He was taken with a faltering in his speech, a weakness in the back sinews of his neck, that oftentimes he held up his head by strength of hand. After this his speech went quite away, and he could speak no more than a swine or a bear. Like one of them he would gruntle and make an ugly noise, according as he was offended or pleased, or would have anything done. He walked about till God had made a sufficient spectacle of his judgments for his sin, and then, on a sudden, he was stricken, and died miserably."

Badman, says Mr. Wiseman, "had malice enough in his heart" to turn informer, but he was growing prudent and had an eye to the future. As a tradesman he had to live by his neighbours. He knew that they would not forgive him, so "he had that wit in his anger that he did it not." Nothing else was neglected to make the unfortunate wife miserable. She bore him seven children, also typical fig-

ures. "One was a very gracious child, that loved its mother dearly. This child Mr. Badman could not abide, and it oftenest felt the weight of its father's fingers. Three were as bad as himself. The others that remained became a kind of mongrel professors, not so bad as their father nor so good as their mother, but betwixt them both. They had their mother's notions and their father's actions. Their father did not like them because they had their mother's tongue. Their mother did not like them because they had their father's heart and life, nor were they fit company for good or bad. They were forced with Esau to join in affinity with Ishmael—to wit, to look out for a people that were hypocrites like themselves, and with them they matched and lived and died."

Badman, meanwhile, with the help of his wife's fortune, grew into an important person, and his character becomes a curious study. "He went," we are told, "to school with the devil, from his childhood to the end of his life." He was shrewd in matters of business, began to extend his operations, and "drove a great trade." He carried a double face. He was evil with the evil. He pretended to be good with the good. In religion he affected to be a free-thinker, careless of death and judgment, and ridiculing those who feared them "as frightened with unseen bug-bears." But he wore a mask when it suited him, and admired himself for the ease with which he could assume whatever aspect was convenient. "I can be religious and irreligious," he said; "I can be anything or nothing. I can swear, and speak against swearing. I can lie, and speak against lying. I can drink, wench, be unclean, and defraud, and not be troubled for it. I can enjoy myself, and am master of my own ways, not they of me. This I have attained with much study, care, and pains." "An

Atheist Badman was, if such a thing as an Atheist could be. He was not alone in that mystery. There was abundance of men of the same mind and the same principle. He was only an arch or chief one among them."

Mr. Badman now took to speculation, which Bunyan's knowledge of business enabled him to describe with instructive minuteness. His adventures were on a large scale, and by some mistakes and by personal extravagance he had nearly ruined himself a second time. In this condition he discovered a means, generally supposed to be a more modern invention, of "getting money by handfuls."

"He gave a sudden and great rush into several men's debts to the value of four or five thousand pounds, driving at the same time a very great trade by selling many things for less than they cost him, to get him custom and blind his creditors' eyes. When he had well feathered his nest with other men's goods and money, after a little while he breaks; while he had by craft and knavery made so sure of what he had that his creditors could not touch a penny. He sends mournful, sugared letters to them, desiring them not to be severe with him, for he bore towards all men an honest mind, and would pay them as far as he was able. He talked of the greatness of the taxes, the badness of the times, his losses by bad debts, and he brought them to a composition to take five shillings in the pound. His release was signed and sealed, and Mr. Badman could now put his head out-of-doors again, and be a better man than when he shut up shop by several thousands of pounds."

Twice or three times he repeated the same trick with equal success. It is likely enough that Bunyan was drawing from life, and perhaps from a member of his own congregation; for he says that "he had known a professor do it." He detested nothing so much as sham religion,

which was put on as a pretence. "A professor," he exclaims, "and practise such villanies as these! Such an one is not worthy the name. Go, professors, go—leave off profession, unless you will lead your lives according to your profession. Better never profess than make profession a stalking-horse to sin, deceit, the devil, and hell."

Bankruptcy was not the only art by which Badman piled up his fortune. The seventeenth century was not so far behind us as we sometimes persuade ourselves. "He dealt by deceitful weights and measures. He kept weights to buy by, and weights to sell by; measures to buy by, and measures to sell by. Those he bought by were too big, and those he sold by were too little. If he had to do with other men's weights and measures, he could use a thing called sleight of hand. He had the art, besides, to misreckon men in their accounts, whether by weight or measure or money; and if a question was made of his faithful dealing, he had his servants ready that would vouch and swear to his look or word. He would sell goods that cost him not the best price by far, for as much as he sold his best of all for. He had also a trick to mingle his commodity, that that which was bad might go off with the least mistrust. If any of his customers paid him money, he would call for payment a second time, and if they could not produce good and sufficient ground of the payment, a hundred to one but they paid it again."

"To buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest," was Mr. Badman's common rule in business. According to modern political economy, it is the cardinal principle of wholesome trade. In Bunyan's opinion it was knavery in disguise, and certain to degrade and demoralise every one who acted upon it. Bunyan had evidently

thought on the subject. Mr. Attentive is made to object :—

" But you know that there is no settled price set by God upon any commodity that is bought or sold under the sun; but all things that we buy and sell do ebb and flow as to price, like the tide. How then shall a man of tender conscience do, neither to wrong the seller, buyer, nor himself in the buying and selling of commodities?"

Mr. Wiseman answers in the spirit of our old Acts of Parliament, before political economy was invented :—

" Let a man have conscience towards God, charity to his neighbours, and moderation in dealing. Let the tradesman consider that there is not that in great gettings and in abundance which the most of men do suppose; for all that a man has over and above what serves for his present necessity and supply serves only to feed the lusts of the eye. Be thou confident that God's eyes are upon thy ways; that He marks them, writes them down, and seals them up in a bag against the time to come. Be sure that thou rememberest that thou knowest not the day of thy death. Thou shalt have nothing that thou mayest so much as carry away in thy hand. Guilt shall go with thee if thou hast gotten thy substance dishonestly, and they to whom thou shalt leave it shall receive it to their hurt. These things duly considered, I will shew thee how thou shouldst live in the practical part of this art. Art thou to buy or sell? If thou sellest, do not commend. If thou buyest, do not dispraise any otherwise but to give the thing that thou hast to do with its just value and worth. Art thou a seller, and do things grow cheap? set not thy hand to help or hold them up higher. Art thou a buyer, and do things grow dear? use no cunning or deceitful language to pull them down. Leave things to the Providence

of God, and do thou with moderation submit to his hand. Hurt not thy neighbour by crying out, Scarcity, scarcity ! beyond the truth of things. Especially take heed of doing this by way of a prognostic for time to come. This wicked thing may be done by hoarding up (food) when the hunger and necessity of the poor calls for it. If things rise, do thou be grieved. Be also moderate in all thy sellings, and be sure let the poor have a pennyworth, and sell thy corn to those who are in necessity ; which thou wilt do when thou shovest mercy to the poor in thy selling to him, and when thou underseldest the market for his sake because he is poor. This is to buy and sell with a good conscience. The buyer thou wrongest not, thy conscience thou wrongest not, thyself thou wrongest not, for God will surely recompense with thee."

These views of Bunyan's are at issue with modern science, but his principles and ours are each adjusted to the objects of desire which good men in those days, and good men in ours, have respectively set before themselves. If wealth means money, as it is now assumed to do, Bunyan is wrong, and modern science right. If wealth means moral welfare, then those who aim at it will do well to follow Bunyan's advice. It is to be feared that this part of his doctrine is less frequently dwelt upon by those who profess to admire and follow him, than the theory of imputed righteousness or justification by faith.

Mr. Badman, by his various ingenuities, became a wealthy man. His character as a tradesman could not have been a secret from his neighbours, but money and success coloured it over. The world spoke well of him. He became "proud and haughty," took part in public affairs, "counted himself as wise as the wisest in the country, as good as the best, and as beautiful as he that had the most

of it." "He took great delight in praising himself, and as much in the praises that others gave him." "He could not abide that any should think themselves above him, or that their wit and personage should be by others set before his." He had an objection, nevertheless, to being called proud, and when Mr. Attentive asked why, his companion answered with a touch which reminds us of De Foe, that "*Badman did not tell him the reason.*" He supposed it to be that which was common to all vile persons. They loved their vice, but cared not to bear its name." Badman said he was unwilling to seem singular and fantastical, and in this way he justified his expensive and luxurious way of living. Singularity of all kinds he affected to dislike, and for that reason his special pleasure was to note the faults of professors. "If he could get anything by the end that had scandal in it—if it did but touch professors, however falsely reported—oh, then he would glory, laugh and be glad, and lay it upon the whole party. Hang these rogues, he would say, there is not a barrel better herring in all the holy brotherhood of them. Like to like, quote the devil to the collier. This is your precise crew, and then he would send them all home with a curse."

Thus Bunyan developed his specimen scoundrel, till he brought him to the high altitudes of worldly prosperity; skilful in every villainous art, skilful equally in keeping out of the law's hands, and feared, admired, and respected by all his neighbours. The reader who desires to see Providence vindicated would now expect to find him detected in some crimes by which justice could lay hold, and poetical retribution fall upon him in the midst of his triumph. An inferior artist would certainly have allowed his story to end in this way. But Bunyan, satisfied though he was that dramatic judgments did overtake of-

fenders in this world with direct and startling appropriateness, was yet aware that it was often otherwise, and that the worst fate which could be inflicted on a completely worthless person was to allow him to work out his career unvisited by any penalties which might have disturbed his conscience and occasioned his amendment. He chose to make his story natural, and to confine himself to natural machinery. The judgment to come Mr. Badman laughed at "as old woman's fable," but his courage lasted only as long as he was well and strong. One night, as he was riding home drunk, his horse fell, and he broke his leg. "You would not think," says Mr. Wiseman, "how he swore at first. Then, coming to himself, and finding he was badly hurt, he cried out, after the manner of such, Lord, help me! Lord, have mercy on me! good God, deliver me! and the like. He was picked up and taken home, where he lay some time. In his pain he called on God; but whether it was that his sin might be pardoned, and his soul saved, or whether to be rid of his pain," Mr. Wiseman "could not determine." This leads to several stories of drunkards which Bunyan clearly believed to be literally true. Such facts or legends were the food on which his mind had been nourished. They were in the air which contemporary England breathed.

"I have read, in Mr. Clarke's *Looking-glass for Sinners*, Mr. Wiseman said, "that upon a time a certain drunken fellow boasted in his cups that there was neither heaven nor hell. Also, he said he believed that man had no soul, and that for his own part he would sell his soul to any that would buy it. Then did one of his companions buy it of him for a cup of wine, and presently the devil, in man's shape, bought it of that man again at the same price; and so, in the presence of them all, laid hold of the

soul-seller, and carried him away through the air, so that he was no more heard of."

Again :

"There was one at Salisbury drinking and carousing at a tavern, and he drank a health to the devil, saying that if the devil would not come and pledge him, he could not believe that there was either God or devil. Whereupon his companions, stricken with fear, hastened out of the room; and presently after, hearing a hideous noise and smelling a stinking savour, the vintner ran into the chamber, and coming in he missed his guest, and found the window broken, the iron bars in it bowed and all bloody, but the man was never heard of afterwards."

These visitations were answers to a direct challenge of the evil spirit's existence, and were thus easy to be accounted for. But no devil came for Mr. Badman. He clung to his unfortunate, neglected wife. "She became his dear wife, his godly wife, his honest wife, his duck, his dear and all." He thought he was dying, and hell and all its horrors rose up before him. "Fear was in his face, and in his tossings to and fro he would often say, I am undone, I am undone; my vile life hath undone me!" Atheism did not help him. It never helped anyone in such extremities, Mr. Wiseman said, as he had known in another instance :—

"There was a man dwelt about twelve miles off from us," he said, "that had so trained up himself in his Atheistical notions, that at last he attempted to write a book against Jesus Christ and the Divine authority of the Scriptures. I think it was not printed. Well, after many days God struck him with sickness, whereof he died. So, being sick, and musing of his former doings, the book that he had written tore his conscience as a lion would

tear a kid. Some of my friends went to see him; and as they were in his chamber one day, he hastily called for pen and ink and paper, which, when it was given to him, he took it and writ to this purpose: "I, such an one in such a town, must go to hell-fire for writing a book against Jesus Christ." He would have leaped out of the window to have killed himself, but was by them prevented of that, so he died in his bed by such a death as it was."

Badman seemed equally miserable. But death-bed repentances, as Bunyan sensibly said, were seldom of more value than "the howling of a dog." The broken leg was set again. The pain of body went, and with it the pain of mind. "He was assisted out of his uneasiness," says Bunyan, with a characteristic hit at the scientific views then coming into fashion, "by his doctor," who told him that his alarms had come "from an affection of the brain, caused by want of sleep;" "they were nothing but vapours and the effects of his distemper." He gathered his spirits together, and became the old man once more. His poor wife, who had believed him penitent, broke her heart, and died of the disappointment. The husband gave himself up to loose connections with abandoned women, one of whom persuaded him one day, when he was drunk, to make her a promise of marriage, and she held him to his word. Then retribution came upon him, with the coarse commonplace, yet rigid justice which fact really deals out. The second bad wife avenged the wrongs of the first innocent wife. He was mated with a companion "who could fit him with cursing and swearing, give him oath for oath, and curse for curse. They would fight, and fly at each other like cat and dog." In this condition—for Bunyan, before sending his hero to his account, gave him a protracted spell of earthly discomforts—they lived

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sixteen years together. Fortune, who had so long favoured his speculations, turned her back upon him. Between them they "sinned all his wealth away," and at last parted "as poor as howlets."

Then came the end. Badman was still in middle life, and had naturally a powerful constitution; but his "cups and his queans" had undermined his strength. Dropsy came, and gout, with worse in his bowels, and "on the top of them all, as the captain of the men of death that came to take him away," consumption. Bunyan was a true artist, though he knew nothing of the rules, and was not aware that he was an artist at all. He was not to be tempted into spoiling a natural story with the melodramatic horrors of a sinner's death-bed. He had let his victim "howl" in the usual way, when he meant him to recover. He had now simply to conduct him to the gate of the place where he was to receive the reward of his iniquities. It was enough to bring him thither still impenitent, with the grave solemnity with which a felon is taken to execution.

"As his life was full of sin," says Mr. Wiseman, "so his death was without repentance. He had not, in all the time of his sickness, a sight and a sense of his sins; but was as much at quiet as if he had never sinned in his life; he was as secure as if he had been sinless as an angel. When he drew near his end, there was no more alteration in him than what was made by his disease upon his body. He was the self-same Mr. Badman still, not only in name but in condition, and that to the very day of his death and the moment in which he died. There seemed not to be in it to the standers-by so much as a strong struggle of nature. He died like a lamb, or, as men call it, like a chrisom child, quietly and without fear."

To which end of Mr. Badman Bunyan attaches the following remarks: "If a wicked man, if a man who has lived all his days in notorious sin, dies quietly, his quiet dying is so far from being a sign of his being saved that it is an incontestable proof of his damnation. No man can be saved except he repents; nor can he repent that knows not that he is a sinner: and he that knows himself to be a sinner will, I warrant him, be molested for his knowledge before he can die quietly. I am no admirer of sick-bed repentance; for I think verily it is seldom good for anything. But I see that he that hath lived in sin and profaneness all his days, as Badman did, and yet shall die quietly—that is, without repentance steps in between his life and his death—is assuredly gone to hell. When God would show the greatness of his anger against sin and sinners in one word, He saith, Let them alone! Let them alone—that is, disturb them not. Let them go on without control. Let the devil enjoy them peaceably. Let him carry them out of the world, unconverted, quietly. This is the sorest of judgments. I do not say that all wicked men that are molested at their death with a sense of sin and fear of hell do therefore go to heaven; for some are made to see and are left to despair. But I say there is no surer sign of a man's damnation than to die quietly after a sinful life—than to sin and die with a heart that cannot repent. The opinion, therefore, of the common people of this kind of death is frivolous and vain."

So ends this very remarkable story. It is extremely interesting, merely as a picture of vulgar English life in a provincial town, such as Bedford was when Bunyan lived there. The drawing is so good, the details so minute, the conception so unexaggerated, that we are disposed to believe that we must have a real history before us. But such

a supposition is only a compliment to the skill of the composer. Bunyan's inventive faculty was a spring that never ran dry. He had a manner, as I said, like De Foe's, of creating the allusion that we are reading realities, by little touches such as "I do not know;" "He did not tell me this;" or the needless introduction of particulars irrelevant to the general plot such as we always stumble on in life, and writers of fiction usually omit. Bunyan was never prosecuted for libel by Badman's relations, and the character is the corresponding contrast to Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the pilgrim's journey being in the opposite direction to the other place. Throughout we are on the solid earth, amidst real experiences. No demand is made on our credulity by Providential interpositions, except in the intercalated anecdotes which do not touch the story itself. The wicked man's career is not brought to the abrupt or sensational issues so much in favour with ordinary didactic tale-writers. Such issues are the exception, not the rule, and the edifying story loses its effect when the reader turns from it to actual life, and perceives that the majority are not punished in any such way. Bunyan conceals nothing, assumes nothing, and exaggerates nothing. He makes his bad man sharp and shrewd. He allows sharpness and shrewdness to bring him the rewards which such qualities in fact command. Badman is successful, he is powerful; he enjoys all the pleasures which money can buy; his bad wife helps him to ruin, but otherwise he is not unhappy, and he dies in peace. Bunyan has made him a brute, because such men do become brutes. It is the real punishment of brutal and selfish habits. There the figure stands: a picture of a man in the rank of English life with which Bunyan was most familiar, travelling along the primrose path to the everlast-

ing bonfire, as the way to Emmanuel's Land was through the Slough of Despond and the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Pleasures are to be found among the primroses, such pleasures as a brute can be gratified by. Yet the reader feels that, even if there was no bonfire, he would still prefer to be with Christian.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### "THE HOLY WAR."

THE supernatural has been successfully represented in poetry, painting, or sculpture, only at particular periods of human history, and under peculiar mental conditions. The artist must himself believe in the supernatural, or his description of it will be a sham, without dignity and without credibility. He must feel himself able, at the same time, to treat the subject which he selects with freedom, throwing his own mind boldly into it, or he will produce, at best, the hard and stiff forms of literal tradition. When Benvenuto Cellini was preparing to make an image of the Virgin, he declares gravely that Our Lady appeared to him, that he might know what she was like; and so real was the apparition that, for many months after, he says that his friends, when the room was dark, could see a faint aureole about his head. Yet Benvenuto worked as if his own brain was partly the author of what he produced, and, like other contemporary artists, used his mistresses for his models, and was no servile copyist of phantoms seen in visions. There is a truth of the imagination, and there is a truth of fact, religion hovering between them, translating one into the other, turning natural phenomena into the activity of personal beings; or giving earthly names and habitations to mere creatures of fancy. Imagination

creates a mythology. The priest takes it and fashions out of it a theology, a ritual, or a sacred history. So long as the priest can convince the world that he is dealing with literal facts he holds reason prisoner, and imagination is his servant. In the twilight, when dawn is coming near but has not yet come; when the uncertain nature of the legend is felt, though not intelligently discerned—imagination is the first to resume its liberty ; it takes possession of its own inheritance, it dreams of its gods and demi-gods, as Benevenuto dreamt of the Virgin, and it re-shapes the priest's traditions in noble and beautiful forms. Homer and the Greek dramatists would not have dared to bring the gods upon the stage so freely had they believed Zeus and Apollo were living persons, like the man in the next street, who might call the poet to account for what they were made to do and say ; but neither, on the other hand, could they have been actively conscious that Zeus and Apollo were apparitions, which had no existence except in their own brains.

The condition is extremely peculiar. It can exist only in certain epochs, and in its nature is necessarily transitory. Where belief is consciously gone, the artist has no reverence for his work, and, therefore, can inspire none. The greatest genius in the world could not reproduce another Athene like that of Phidias. But neither must the belief be too complete. The poet's tongue stammers when he would bring beings before us who, though invisible, are awful personal existences, in whose stupendous presence we one day expect to stand. As long as the conviction survives that he is dealing with literal truths, he is safe only while he follows with shoeless feet the letter of the tradition. He dares not step beyond, lest he degrade the Infinite to the human level, and if he is wise he prefers to

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content himself with humbler subjects. A Christian artist can represent Jesus Christ as a man because He was a man, and because the details of the Gospel history leave room for the imagination to work. To represent Christ as the Eternal Son in heaven, to bring before us the Persons of the Trinity, consulting, planning, and reasoning, to take us into their everlasting Council-chamber, as Homer takes us into Olympus, will be possible only when Christianity ceases to be regarded as a history of true facts. Till then it is a trespass beyond the permitted limits, and revolts us by the inadequacy of the result. Either the artist fails altogether by attempting the impossible, or those whom he addresses are themselves intellectually injured by an unreal treatment of truths hitherto sacred. They confound the representation with its object, and regard the whole of it as unreal together.

These observations apply most immediately to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and are meant to explain the unsatisfactoriness of it. Milton himself was only partially emancipated from the bondage of the letter; half in earth, half "pawing to get free," like his own lion. The war in heaven, the fall of the rebel angels, the horrid splendours of Pandemonium seem legitimate subjects for Christian poetry. They stand for something which we regard as real, yet we are not bound to any actual opinions about them. Satan has no claim on reverential abstinence; and Paradise and the Fall of Man are perhaps sufficiently mythic to permit poets to take certain liberties with them. But even so far Milton has not entirely succeeded. His wars of the angels are shadowy. They have no substance, like the battles of Greeks and Trojans, or Centaurs and Lapithæ; and Satan could not be made interesting without touches of a nobler nature—that is, without ceasing to be the Satan of the

Christian religion. But this is not the worst. When we are carried up into heaven, and hear the persons of the Trinity conversing on the mischiefs which have crept into the universe, and planning remedies and schemes of salvation like Puritan divines, we turn away incredulous and resentful. Theologians may form such theories for themselves, if not wisely, yet without offence. They may study the world in which they are placed with the light which can be thrown upon it by the book which they call the Word of God. They may form their conclusions, invent their schemes of doctrine, and commend to their flocks the interpretation of the mystery at which they have arrived. The cycles and epicycles of the Ptolemaic astronomers were imperfect hypotheses, but they were stages on which the mind could rest for a more complete examination of the celestial phenomena. But the poet does not offer us phrases and formulas; he presents to us personalities, living and active, influenced by emotions and reasoning from premises; and when the unlimited and incomprehensible Being whose attributes are infinite, of whom, from the inadequacy of our ideas, we can only speak in negatives, is brought on the stage to talk like an ordinary man, we feel that Milton has mistaken the necessary limits of his art.

When Faust claims affinity with the Erdgeist, the spirit tells him to seek affinities with beings which he can comprehend. The commandment which forbade the representation of God in a bodily form, forbids the poet equally to make God describe his feelings and his purposes. Where the poet would create a character he must himself comprehend it first to its inmost fibre. He cannot comprehend his own Creator. Admire as we may *Paradise Lost*; try as we may to admire *Paradise Regained*; acknowledge

as we must the splendour of the imagery and the stately march of the verse—there comes upon us irresistibly a sense of the unfitness of the subject for Milton's treatment of it. If the story which he tells us is true, it is too momentous to be played with in poetry. We prefer to hear it in plain prose, with a minimum of ornament and the utmost possible precision of statement. Milton himself had not arrived at thinking it to be a legend, a picture, like a Greek Mythology. His poem falls between two modes of treatment and two conceptions of truth; we wonder, we recite, we applaud, but something comes in between our minds and a full enjoyment, and it will not satisfy us better as time goes on.

The same objection applies to *The Holy War* of Bunyan. It is, as I said, a people's version of the same series of subjects—the creation of man, the fall of man, his redemption, his ingratitude, his lapse, and again his restoration. The chief figures are the same, the action is the same, though more varied and complicated, and the general effect is unsatisfactory from the same cause. Prose is less ambitious than poetry. There is an absence of attempts at grand effects. There is no effort after sublimity, and there is consequently a lighter sense of incongruity in the failure to reach it. On the other hand, there is the greater fulness of detail so characteristic of Bunyan's manner; and fulness of detail on a theme so far beyond our understanding is as dangerous as vague grandiloquence. In *The Pilgrim's Progress* we are among genuine human beings. The reader knows the road too well which Christian follows. He has struggled with him in the Slough of Despond. He has shuddered with him in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He has groaned with him in the dungeons of Doubting Castle. He has

encountered on his journey the same fellow-travellers. Who does not know Mr. Pliable, Mr. Obstinate, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Feeble Mind, and all the rest? They are representative realities, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. "If we prick them, they bleed; if we tickle them, they laugh," or they make us laugh. "They are warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer" as we are. The human actors in *The Holy War* are parts of men—special virtues, special vices: allegories in fact as well as in name, which all Bunyan's genius can only occasionally substantiate into persons. The plot of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is simple. *The Holy War* is prolonged through endless vicissitudes, with a doubtful issue after all, and the incomprehensibility of the Being who allows Satan to defy him so long and so successfully is unpleasantly and harshly brought home to us. True, it is so in life. Evil remains after all that has been done for us. But life is confessedly a mystery. *The Holy War* professes to interpret the mystery, and only restates the problem in a more elaborate form. Man Friday, on reading it, would have asked, even more emphatically, "Why God not kill the devil?" and Robinson Crusoe would have found no assistance in answering him. For these reasons I cannot agree with Macaulay in thinking that, if there had been no *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Holy War* would have been the first of religious allegories. We may admire the workmanship, but the same undefined sense of unreality which pursues us through Milton's epic would have interfered equally with the acceptance of this. The question to us is if the facts are true. If true, they require no allegories to touch either our hearts or our intellects.

*The Holy War* would have entitled Bunyan to a place among the masters of English literature. It would never

have made his name a household word in every English-speaking family on the globe.

The story, which I shall try to tell in an abridged form, is introduced by a short prefatory poem. Works of fancy, Bunyan tells us, are of many sorts, according to the author's humour. For himself he says to his reader—

"I have something else to do  
Than write vain stories thus to trouble you.  
What here I say some men do know too well ;  
They can with tears and joy the story tell.  
The town of Mansoul is well known to many,  
Nor are her troubles doubted of by any  
That are acquainted with those histories  
That Mansoul and her wars anatomize.

"Then lend thine ears to what I do relate  
Touching the town of Mansoul and her state ;  
How she was lost, took captive, made a slave,  
And how against him set that should her save,  
Yea, how by hostile ways she did oppose  
Her Lord, and with his enemy did close,  
For they are true ; he that will them deny  
Must needs the best of records vilify.

"For my part, I myself was in the town  
Both when 'twas set up and when pulling down.  
I saw Diabolus in his possession,  
And Mansoul also under his oppression :  
Yea, I was there when she him owned for Lord,  
And to him did submit with one accord.

"When Mansoul trampled upon things divine,  
And wallowed in filth as doth a swine,  
When she betook herself unto his arms,  
Fought her Emmanuel, despised his charms ;  
Then was I there, and did rejoice to see  
Diabolus and Mansoul so agree.

"Let no man count me then a fable-maker,  
Nor make my name or credit a partaker  
Of their derision. What is here in view  
Of mine own knowledge I dare say is true."

At setting out we are introduced into the famous continent of "Universe," a large and spacious country lying between the two poles—"the people of it not all of one complexion nor yet of one language, mode or way of religion, but differing as much as the planets themselves; some right, some wrong, even as it may happen to be."

In this country of "Universe" was a fair and delicate town and corporation called "Mansoul," a town for its building so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, that with reference to its original (state) there was not its equal under heaven. The first founder was Shaddai, who built it for his own delight. In the midst of the town was a famous and stately palace which Shaddai intended for himself.<sup>1</sup> He had no intention of allowing strangers to intrude there. And the peculiarity of the place was that the walls of Mansoul<sup>2</sup> could never be broken down or hurt unless the townsmen consented. Mansoul had five gates which, in like manner, could only be forced if those within allowed it. These gates were Eargate, Eyegate, Moutligate, Nosegate, and Feelgate. Thus provided, Mansoul was at first all that its founder could desire. It had the most excellent laws in the world. There was not a rogue or a rascal inside its whole precincts. The inhabitants were all true men.

Now there was a certain giant named Diabolus—king of the blacks or negroes, as Bunyan noticeably calls them

<sup>1</sup> Bunyan says, in a marginal note, that by this palace he means the heart.

<sup>2</sup> The body.

—the negroes standing for sinners or fallen angels. Diabolus had once been a servant of Shaddai, one of the chief in his territories. Pride and ambition had led him to aspire to the crown which was settled on Shaddai's Son. He had formed a conspiracy and planned a revolution. Shaddai and his Son, "being all eye," easily detected the plot. Diabolus and his crew were bound in chains, banished, and thrown into a pit, there to "abide for ever." This was their sentence; but out of the pit, in spite of it, they in some way contrived to escape. They ranged about full of malice against Shaddai, and looking for means to injure him. They came at last on Mansoul. They determined to take it, and called a council to consider how it could best be done. Diabolus was aware of the condition that no one could enter without the inhabitants' consent. Alecto, Apollyon, Beelzebub, Lucifer (Pagan and Christian demons intermixed indifferently) gave their several opinions. Diabolus at length, at Lucifer's suggestion, decided to assume the shape of one of the creatures over which Mansoul had dominion; and he selected as the fittest that of a snake, which at that time was in great favour with the people as both harmless and wise.

The population of Mansoul were simple, innocent folks who believed everything that was said to them. Force, however, might be necessary, as well as cunning, and the Tisiphone, a fury of the Lakes, was required to assist. The attempt was to be made at Eargate. A certain Captain Resistance was in charge of this gate, whom Diabolus feared more than any one in the place. Tisiphone was to shoot him.

The plans being all laid, Diabolus in his snake's dress approached the wall, accompanied by one Ill Pause, a famous orator, the Fury following behind. He asked for a

parley with the heads of the town. Captain Resistance, two of the great nobles, Lord Innocent, and Lord Will be Will, with Mr. Conscience, the Recorder, and Lord Understanding, the Lord Mayor, came to the gate to see what he wanted. Lord Will be Will plays a prominent part in the drama both for good and evil. He is neither Free Will, nor Wilfulness, nor Inclination, but the quality which metaphysicians and theologians agree in describing as "the Will." "The Will" simply—a subtle something of great importance; but what it is they have never been able to explain.

Lord Will be Will inquired Diabolus's business. Diabolus, "meek as a lamb," said he was a neighbour of theirs. He had observed with distress that they were living in a state of slavery, and he wished to help them to be free. Shaddai was no doubt a great prince, but he was an arbitrary despot. There was no liberty where the laws were unreasonable, and Shaddai's laws were the reverse of reasonable. They had a fruit growing among them, in Mansoul, which they had but to eat to become wise. Knowledge was well known to be the best of possessions. Knowledge was freedom; ignorance was bondage; and yet Shaddai had forbidden them to touch this precious fruit.

At that moment Captain Resistance fell dead, pierced by an arrow from Tisiphone. Ill Pause made a flowing speech, in the midst of which Lord Innocent fell also, either through a blow from Diabolus, or "overpowered by the stinking breath of the old villain Ill Pause." The people flew upon the apple-tree; Eargate and Eyegate were thrown open, and Diabolus was invited to come in; when at once he became King of Mansoul, and established himself in the castle.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The heart.

The magistrates were immediately changed. Lord Understanding ceased to be Lord Mayor. Mr. Conscience was no longer left as Recorder. Diabolus built up a wall in front of Lord Understanding's palace, and shut off the light, "so that till Mansoul was delivered the old Lord Mayor was rather an impediment than an advantage to that famous town." Diabolus tried long to bring "Conscience" over to his side, but never quite succeeded. The Recorder became greatly corrupted, but he could not be prevented from now and then remembering Shaddai; and when the fit was on him he would shake the town with his exclamations. Diabolus, therefore, had to try other methods with him. "He had a way to make the old gentleman, when he was merry, unsay and deny what in his fits he had affirmed; and this was the next way to make him ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him." To make all secure, Diabolus often said, "Oh, Mansoul, consider that, notwithstanding the old gentleman's rage and the rattle of the high, thundering words, you hear nothing of Shaddai himself." The Recorder had pretended that the voice of the Lord was speaking in him. Had this been so, Diabolus argued that the Lord would have done more than speak. "Shaddai," he said, "valued not the loss nor the rebellion of Mansoul, nor would he trouble himself with calling his town to a reckoning."

In this way the Recorder came to be generally hated, and more than once the people would have destroyed him. Happily his house was a castle near the water-works. When the rabble pursued him, he would pull up the sluices,<sup>1</sup> let in the flood, and drown all about him.

Lord Will be Will, on the other hand, "as high born as any in Mansoul," became Diabolus's principal minister.

<sup>1</sup> Fears.

He had been the first to propose admitting Diabolus, and he was made Captain of the Castle, Governor of the Wall, and Keeper of the Gates. Will be Will had a clerk named Mr. Mind, a man every way like his master, and Mansoul was thus brought "under the lusts" of Will and Intellect. Mr. Mind had in his house some old rent and torn parchments of the law of Shaddai. The Recorder had some more in his study; but to these Will be Will paid no attention, and surrounded himself with officials who were all in Diabolus's interest. He had as deputy one Mr. Affection, "much debauched in his principles, so that he was called Vile Affection." Vile Affection married Mr. Mind's daughter, Carnal Lust, by whom he had three sons—Impudent, Black Mouth, and Hate Reproof; and three daughters—Scorn Truth, Slight Good, and Revenge. All traces of Shaddai were now swept away. His image, which had stood in the market-place, was taken down, and an artist called Mr. No Truth was employed to set up the image of Diabolus in place of it. Lord Lustings—"who never savoured good, but evil"—was chosen for the new Lord Mayor. Mr. Forget Good was appointed Recorder. There were new burgesses and aldermen, all with appropriate names, for which Bunyan was never at a loss—Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Haughty, Mr. Sweating, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. Pitiless, Mr. Fury, Mr. No Truth, Mr. Stand to Lies, Mr. False-peace, Mr. Drunkenness, Mr. Cheating, Mr. Atheism, and another; thirteen of them in all. Mr. Incredulity was the eldest, Mr. Atheism the youngest in the company—a shrewd and correct arrangement. Diabolus, on his part, set to work to fortify Mansoul. He built three fortresses—"The Hold of Defiance" at Eyegate, "that the light might be darkened there;" "Midnight Hold" near the old Castle, to keep Mansoul from knowledge of itself; and

"Sweet Sin Hold" in the market-place, that there might be no desire of good there. These strongholds being established and garrisoned, Diabolus thought that he had made his conquest secure.

So far the story runs on firmly and clearly. It is vivid, consistent in itself, and held well within the limits of human nature and experience. But, like Milton, Bunyan is now, by the exigencies of the situation, forced upon more perilous ground. He carries us into the presence of Shaddai himself, at the time when the loss of Mansoul was reported in heaven.

The king, his son, his high lords, his chief captains and nobles were all assembled to hear. There was universal grief, in which the king and his son shared, or rather seemed to share—for at once the drama of the Fall of Mankind becomes no better than a Mystery Play. "Shaddai and his son had foreseen it all long before, and had provided for the relief of Mansoul, though they told not everybody thereof—but because they would have a share in condoling of the misery of Mansoul they did, and that at the rate of the highest degree, bewail the losing of Mansoul"—"thus to show their love and compassion."

*Paradise Lost* was published at the time that Bunyan wrote this passage. If he had not seen it, the coincidences of treatment are singularly curious. It is equally singular, if he had seen it, that Milton should not here at least have taught him to avoid making the Almighty into a stage actor. The Father and Son consult how "to do what they had designed before." They decide that at a certain time, which they preordain, the Son, "a sweet and comely person," shall make a journey into the Universe, and lay a foundation there for Mansoul's deliverance. Milton offends in the scene less than Bunyan; but Milton cannot

persuade us that it is one which should have been represented by either of them. They should have left "plans of salvation" to eloquent orators in the pulpit.

Though the day of deliverance by the method proposed was as yet far off, the war against Diabolus was to be commenced immediately. The Lord Chief Secretary was ordered to put in writing Shaddai's intentions, and cause them to be published.<sup>1</sup> Mansoul, it was announced, was to be put into a better condition than it was in before Diabolus took it.

The report of the Council in Heaven was brought to Diabolus, who took his measures accordingly, Lord Will be Will standing by him and executing all his directions. Mansoul was forbidden to read Shaddai's proclamation. Diabolus imposed a great oath on the townspeople never to desert him; he believed that if they entered into a covenant of this kind Shaddai could not absolve them from it. They "swallowed the engagement as if it had been a sprat in the mouth of a whale." Being now Diabolus's trusty children, he gave them leave "to do whatever their appetites prompted to do." They would thus involve themselves in all kinds of wickedness, and Shaddai's son "being Holy" would be less likely to interest himself for them. When they had in this way put themselves, as Diabolus hoped, beyond reach of mercy, he informed them that Shaddai was raising an army to destroy the town. No quarter would be given, and unless they defended themselves like men they would all be made slaves. Their spirit being roused, he armed them with the shield of unbelief, "calling into question the truth of the Word." He gave them a helmet of hope—"hope of doing well at last, whatever lives they might lead;" for a breastplate a heart

<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures.

as hard as iron, "most necessary for all that hated Shaddai;" and another piece of most excellent armour, "a drunken and prayerless spirit that scorned to cry for mercy." Shaddai, on his side, had also prepared his forces. He will not as yet send his son. The first expedition was to fail, and was meant to fail. The object was to try whether Mansoul would return to obedience. And yet Shaddai knew that it would not return to obedience. Bunyan was too ambitious to explain the inexplicable. Fifty thousand warriors were collected, all chosen by Shaddai himself. There were four leaders—Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution—the martial saints, with whom Macaulay thinks Bunyan made acquaintance when he served, if serve he did, with Fairfax. The bearings on their banners were three black thunderbolts—the Book of the Law, wide open, with a flame of fire bursting from it; a burning, fiery furnace; and a fruitless tree with an axe at its root. These emblems represent the terrors of Mount Sinai, the covenant of works which was not to prevail.

The captains come to the walls of Mansoul, and summon the town to surrender. Their words "beat against Eargate, but without force to break it open." The new officials answer the challenge with defiance. Lord Incredulity knows not by what right Shaddai invades their country. Lord Will be Will and Mr. Forget Good warn them to be off before they rouse Diabolus. The townspeople ring the bells and dance on the walls. Will be Will double-bars the gates. Bunyan's genius is at its best in scenes of this kind. "Old Mr. Prejudice, with sixty deaf men," is appointed to take charge of Eargate. At Eargate, too, are planted two guns, called Highmind and

Heady, "cast in the earth by Diabolus's head founder, whose name was Mr. Puffup."

The fighting begins, but the covenant of works makes little progress. Shaddai's captains, when advancing on Mansoul, had fallen in with "three young fellows of promising appearance" who volunteered to go with them—"Mr. Tradition, Mr. Human Wisdom, and Mr. Man's Intervention." They were allowed to join, and were placed in positions of trust, the captains of the covenant being apparently wanting in discernment. They were taken prisoners in the first skirmish, and immediately changed sides and went over to Diabolus. More battles follow. The roof of the Lord Mayor's house is beaten in. The law is not wholly ineffectual. Six of the Aldermen, the grosser moral sins—Swearing, Stand to Lies, Drunkenness, Cheating, and others—are overcome and killed. Diabolus grows uneasy, and loses his sleep. Old Conscience begins to talk again. A party forms in the town in favour of surrender, and Mr. Parley is sent to Eargate to treat for terms. The spiritual sins—False Peace, Unbelief, Haughtiness, Atheism—are still unsubdued and vigorous. The conditions offered are that Incredulity, Forget Good, and Will be Will shall retain their offices; Mansoul shall be continued in all the liberties which it enjoys under Diabolus; and a further touch is added which shows how little Bunyan sympathised with modern notions of the beauty of self-government. No new law or officer shall have any power in Mansoul without the people's consent.

Boanerges will agree to no conditions with rebels. Incredulity and Will be Will advise the people to stand by their rights, and refuse to submit to "unlimited" power. The war goes on, and Incredulity is made Diabolus's universal deputy. Conscience and Understanding, the old

Recorder and Mayor, raise a mutiny, and there is a fight in the streets. Conscience is knocked down by a Diabolonian called Mr. Benummeling. Understanding had a narrow escape from being shot. On the other hand, Mr. Mind, who had come over to the Conservative side, laid about bravely, tumbled old Mr. Prejudice into the dirt, and kicked him where he lay. Even Will be Will seemed to be wavering in his allegiance to Diabolus. "He smiled, and did not seem to take one side more than another." The rising, however, is put down—Understanding and Conscience are imprisoned, and Mansoul hardens its heart, chiefly "being in dread of slavery," and thinking liberty too fine a thing to be surrendered.

Shaddai's four captains find that they can do no more. The covenant of works will not answer. They send home a petition, "by the hand of that good man Mr. Love to Mansoul," to beg that some new general may come to lead them. The preordained time has now arrived, and Emmanuel himself is to take the command. He, too, selects his captains—Credence and Good Hope, Charity, and Innocence, and Patience; and the captains have their squires, the counterparts of themselves—Promise and Expectation, Pitiful, Harmless, and Suffer Long. Emmanuel's armour shines like the sun. He has forty-four battering-rams and twenty-two slings—the sixty-six books of the Bible—each made of pure gold. He throws up mounds and trenches, and arms them with his rams, five of the largest being planted on Mount Hearken, over against Eargate. Bunyan was too reverent to imitate the Mystery Plays, and introduce a Mount Calvary with the central sacrifice upon it. The sacrifice is supposed to have been already offered elsewhere. Emmanuel offers mercy to Mansoul, and when it is rejected he threatens judgment and terror.

Diabolus, being wiser than man, is made to know that his hour is approaching. He goes in person to Mouthgate to protest and remonstrate. He asks why Emmanuel is come to torment him. Mansoul has disowned Shaddai and sworn allegiance to himself. He begs Emmanuel to leave him to rule his own subjects in peace.

Emmanuel tells him "he is a thief and a liar." "When," Emmanuel is made to say, "Mansoul sinned by hearkening to thy lie, I put in and became a surety to my Father, body for body, soul for soul, that I would make amends for Mansoul's transgressions, and my Father did accept thereof. So, when the time appointed was come, I gave body for body, soul for soul, life for life, blood for blood, and so redeemed my beloved Mansoul. My Father's law and justice, that were both concerned in the threatening upon transgression, are both now satisfied, and very well content that Mansoul should be delivered."

Even against its deliverers, Mansoul was defended by the original condition of its constitution. There was no way into it but through the gates. Diabolus, feeling that Emmanuel still had difficulties before him, withdrew from the wall, and sent a messenger, Mr. Loth to Stoop, to offer alternative terms, to one or other of which he thought Emmanuel might consent. Emmanuel might be titular sovereign of all Mansoul, if Diabolus might keep the administration of part of it. If this could not be, Diabolus requested to be allowed to reside in Mansoul as a private person. If Emmanuel insisted on his own personal exclusion, at least he expected that his friends and kindred might continue to live there, and that he himself might now and then write them letters, and send them presents and messages, "in remembrance of the merry times they had enjoyed together." Finally, he would like

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to be consulted occasionally when any difficulties arose in Mansoul.

It will be seen that in the end Mansoul was, in fact, left liable to communications from Diabolus very much of this kind. Emmanuel's answer, however, is a peremptory No. Diabolus must take himself away, and no more must be heard of him. Seeing that there was no other resource, Diabolus resolves to fight it out. There is a great battle under the walls, with some losses on Emmanuel's side, even Captain Conviction receiving three wounds in the mouth. The shots from the gold slings mow down whole ranks of Diabolonians. Mr. Love no Good and Mr. Ill Pause are wounded. Old Prejudice and Mr. Anything run away. Lord Will be Will, who still fought for Diabolus, was never so daunted in his life: "he was hurt in the leg, and limped."

Diabolus, when the fight was over, came again to the gate with fresh proposals to Emmanuel. "I," he said, "will persuade Mansoul to receive thee for their Lord, and I know that they will do it the sooner when they understand that I am thy deputy. I will show them wherein they have erred, and that transgression stands in the way to life. I will show them the Holy Law to which they must conform, even that which they have broken. I will press upon them the necessity of a reformation according to thy law. At my own cost I will set up and maintain a sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul." This obviously means the Established Church. Unable to keep mankind directly in his own service, the devil offers to entangle them in the covenant of works, of which the Church of England was the representative. Emmanuel rebukes him for his guile and deceit. "I will govern Mansoul," he says, "by new laws, new officers, new mo-

tives, and new ways. I will pull down the town and build it again, and it shall be as though it had not been, and it shall be the glory of the whole universe."

A second battle follows. Eargate is beaten in. The Prince's army enters and advances as far as the old Recorder's house, where they knock and demand entrance. "The old gentleman, not fully knowing their design, had kept his gates shut all the time of the fight. He as yet knew nothing of the great designs of Emmanuel, and could not tell what to think." The door is violently broken open, and the house is made Emmanuel's headquarters. The townspeople, with Conscience and Understanding at their head, petition that their lives may be spared; but Emmanuel gives no answer, Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction carrying terror into all hearts. Diabolus, the cause of all the mischief, had retreated into the castle.<sup>1</sup> He came out at last, and surrendered, and in dramatic fitness he clearly ought now to have been made away with in a complete manner. Unfortunately, this could not be done. He was stripped of his armour, bound to Emmanuel's chariot-wheels, and thus turned out of Mansoul "into parched places in a salt land, where he might seek rest and find none." The salt land proved as insecure a prison for this embarrassing being as the pit where he was to have abode forever.

Meanwhile, Mansoul being brought upon its knees, the inhabitants were summoned into the castle-yard, when Conscience, Understanding, and Will be Will were committed to ward. They and the rest again prayed for mercy, but again without effect. Emmanuel was silent. They drew another petition, and asked Captain Conviction to present it for them. Captain Conviction declined to

<sup>1</sup> The heart.

be an advocate for rebels, and advised them to send it by one of themselves, with a rope about his neck. Mr. Desires Awake went with it. The Prince took it from his hands, and wept as Desires Awake gave it in. Emmanuel bade him go his way till the request could be considered. The unhappy criminals knew not how to take the answer. Mr. Understanding thought it promised well. Conscience and Will be Will, borne down by shame for their sins, looked for nothing but immediate death. They tried again. They threw themselves on Emmanuel's mercy. They drew up a confession of their horrible iniquities. This, at least, they wished to offer to him whether he would pity them or not. For a messenger some of them thought of choosing one Old Good Deed. Conscience, however, said that would never do. Emmanuel would answer, "Is Old Good Deed yet alive in Mansoul? Then let Old Good Deed save it." Desires Awake went again with the rope on his neck, as Captain Conviction recommended. Mr. Wet Eyes went with him, wringing his hands.

Emmanuel still held out no comfort; he promised merely that in the camp the next morning he would give such an answer as should be to his glory. Nothing but the worst was now looked for. Mansoul passed the night in sackcloth and ashes. When day broke, the prisoners dressed themselves in mourning, and were carried to the camp in chains, with ropes on their necks, beating their breasts. Prostrate before Emmanuel's throne, they repeated their confession. They acknowledged that death and the bottomless pit would be no more than a just retribution for their crimes. As they excused nothing and promised nothing, Emmanuel at once delivered them their pardons sealed with seven seals. He took off their ropes

and mourning, clothed them in shining garments, and gave them chains and jewels.

Lord Will be Will " swooned outright." When he recovered, "the Prince" embraced and kissed him. The bells in Mansoul were set ringing. Bonfires blazed. Emmanuel reviewed his army; and Mansoul, ravished at the sight, prayed him to remain and be their King for ever. He entered the city again in triumph, the people strewing boughs and flowers before him. The streets and squares were rebuilt on a new model. Lord Will be Will, now regenerate, resumed the charge of the gates. The old Lord Mayor was reinstated. Mr. Knowledge was made Recorder, "not out of contempt for old Consciencee, who was by-and-bye to have another employment." Diabolus's image was taken down and broken to pieces, and the inhabitants of Mansoul were so happy that they sang of Emmanuel in their sleep.

Justice, however, remained to be done on the hardened and impenitent.

There were "perhaps necessities in the nature of things," as Bishop Butler says, and an example could not be made of the principal offender. But his servants and old officials were lurking in the lanes and alleys. They were apprehended, thrown into gaol, and brought to formal trial. Here we have Bunyan at his best. The scene in the court rises to the level of the famous trial of Faithful in Vanity Fair. The prisoners were Diabolus's Aldermen —Mr. Atheism, Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Lustings, Mr. Forget Good, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. Falsepeace, and the rest. The proceedings were precisely what Bunyan must have witnessed at a common English Assizes. The Judges were the new Recorder and the new Mayor. Mr. Do-right was Town Clerk. A jury was empanelled in the usual way.

Mr. Knowall, Mr. Telltrue, and Mr. Hatelies were the principal witnesses.

Atheism was first brought to the bar, being charged "with having pertinaciously and doltingly taught that there was no God." He pleaded Not Guilty. Mr. Knowall was placed in the witness-box and sworn.

"My Lord," he said, "I know the prisoner at the bar. I and he were once in Villains' Lane together, and he at that time did briskly talk of diverse opinions. And then and there I heard him say that for his part he did believe that there was no God. 'But,' said he, 'I can profess one and be religious too, if the company I am in and the circumstances of other things,' said he, 'shall put me upon it.'"

Telltrue and Hatelies were next called.

"*Telltrue.* My Lord, I was formerly a great companion of the prisoner's, for the which I now repent me; and I have often heard him say, and with very great stomach-fulness, that he believed there was neither God, Angel, nor Spirit.

"*Town Clerk.* Where did you hear him say so?

"*Telltrue.* In Blackmouth Lane and in Blasphemers' Row, and in many other places besides.

"*Town Clerk.* Have you much knowledge of him?

"*Telltrue.* I know him to be a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolian, and a horrible man to deny a Deity. His father's name was Never be Good, and he had more children than  $\therefore$  Atheism.

"*Town Clerk.* Mr. Hatelies. Look upon the prisoner at the bar. Do you know him.

"*Hatelies.* My Lord, this Atheism is one of the vilest wretches that ever I came near or had to do with in my life. I have heard him say that there is no God. I have heard him say that there is no world to come, no sin, nor punishment hereafter; and, moreover, I have heard him say that it was as good to go to a bad-house as to go to hear a sermon.

"*Town Clerk.* Where did you hear him say these things?

"*Hatelies.* In Drunkards' Row, just at Rascal Lane's End, at a house in which Mr. Impiety lived."

The next prisoner was Mr. Lustings, who said that he was of high birth, and "used to pleasures and pastimes of greatness." He had always been allowed to follow his own inclinations, and it seemed strange to him that he should be called in question for things which not only he but every man secretly or openly approved.

When the evidence had been heard against him he admitted frankly its general correctness.

"I," he said, "was ever of opinion that the happiest life that a man could live on earth was to keep himself back from nothing that he desired; nor have I been false at any time to this opinion of mine, but have lived in the love of my notions all my days. Nor was I ever so churlish, having found such sweetness in them myself, as to keep the commendation of them from others."

Then came Mr. Incredulity. He was charged with having encouraged the town of Mansoul to resist Shaddai. Incredulity, too, had the courage of his opinions.

"I know not Shaddai," he said. "I love my old Prince. I thought it my duty to be true to my trust, and to do what I could to possess the minds of the men of Mansoul to do their utmost to resist strangers and foreigners, and with might to fight against them. Nor have I nor shall I change my opinion for fear of trouble, though you at present are possessed of place and power."

Forget Good pleaded age and craziness. He was the son of a Diabolonian called Love Naught. He had uttered blasphemous speeches in Allbase Lane, next door to the sign of "Conscience Seared with a Hot Iron;" also in Flesh Lane, right opposite the Church; also in Nauseous Street; also at the sign of the "Reprobate," next door to the "Descent into the Pit."

Falsepeace insisted that he was wrongly named in the

indictment. His real name was Peace, and he had always laboured for peace. When war broke out between Shaddai and Diabolus, he had endeavoured to reconcile them, &c. Evidence was given that Falsepeace was his right designation. His father's name was Flatter. His mother, before she married Flatter, was called Mrs. Sootheup. When her child was born she always spoke of him as Falsepeace. She would call him twenty times a day, my little Falsepeace, my pretty Falsepeace, my sweet rogue Falsepeace! &c.

The court rejected his plea. He was told "that he had wickedly maintained the town of Mansoul in rebellion against its king, in a false, lying, and damnable peace, contrary to the law of Shaddai. Peace that was not a companion of truth and holiness, was an accursed and treacherous peace, and was grounded on a lie.

No Truth had assisted with his own hands in pulling down the image of Shaddai. He had set up the horned image of the beast Diabolus at the same place, and had torn and consumed all that remained of the laws of the king.

Pitiless said his name was not Pitiless, but Cheer Up. He disliked to see Mansoul inclined to melancholy, and that was all his offence. Pitiless, however, was proved to be the name of him. It was a habit of the Diabolonians to assume counterfeit appellations. Covetousness called himself Good Husbandry; Pride called himself Handsome; and so on.

Mr. Haughty's figure is admirably drawn in a few lines. Mr. Haughty, when arraigned, declared "that he had carried himself bravely, not considering who was his foe, or what was the cause in which he was engaged. It was enough for him if he fought like a man and came off victorious."

The jury, it seems, made no distinctions between opinions and acts. They did not hold that there was any divine right in man to think what he pleased, and to say what he thought. Bunyan had suffered as a martyr; but it was as a martyr for truth, not for general licence. The genuine Protestants never denied that it was right to prohibit men from teaching lies, and to punish them if they disobeyed. The persecution of which they complained was the persecution of the honest man by the knave.

All the prisoners were found guilty by a unanimous verdict. Even Mr. Moderate, who was one of the jury, thought a man must be wilfully blind who wished to spare them. They were sentenced to be executed the next day. Incredulity contrived to escape in the night. Search was made for him, but he was not to be found in Mansoul. He had fled beyond the walls, and had joined Diabolus near Hell Gate. The rest, we are told, were crucified—crucified by the hands of the men of Mansoul themselves. They fought and struggled at the place of execution so violently that Shaddai's secretary was obliged to send assistance. But justice was done at last, and all the Diabolonians, except Incredulity, were thus made an end of.

They were made an end of for a time only. Mansoul, by faith in Christ, and by the help of the Holy Spirit, had crucified all manner of sin in its members. It was faith that had now the victory. Unbelief had, unfortunately, escaped. It had left Mansoul for the time, and had gone to its master the devil. But unbelief, being intellectual, had not been crucified with the sins of the flesh, and thus could come back, and undo the work which faith had accomplished. I do not know how far this view approves itself to the more curious theologians. Unbelief itself is

said to be a product of the will; but an allegory must not be cross-questioned too minutely.

The cornucopia of spiritual blessings was now opened on Mansoul. All offences were fully and completely forgiven. A Holy Law and Testament was bestowed on the people for their comfort and consolation, with a portion of the grace which dwelt in the hearts of Shaddai and Emmanuel themselves. They were to be allowed free access to Emmanuel's palace at all seasons, he himself undertaking to hear them and redress their grievances, and they were empowered and enjoined to destroy all Diabolonians who might be found at any time within their precincts.

These grants were embodied in a charter which was set up in gold letters on the castle door. Two ministers were appointed to carry on the government—one from Shaddai's court; the other a native of Mansoul. The first was Shaddai's Chief Secretary, the Holy Spirit. He, if they were obedient and well-conducted, would be "ten times better to them than the whole world." But they were cautioned to be careful of their behaviour, for if they grieved him he would turn against them, and the worst might then be looked for. The second minister was the old Recorder, Mr. Conscience, for whom, as was said, a new office had been provided. The address of Emmanuel to Conscience, in handing his commission to him, contains the essence of Bunyan's creed:

"Thou must confine thyself to the teaching of moral virtues, to civil and natural duties. But thou must not attempt to presume to be a revealer of those high and supernatural mysteries that are kept close in the bosom of Shaddai, my father. For those things knows no man; nor can any reveal them but my father's secretary only. . . .

In all high and supernatural things thou must go to him for information and knowledge. Wherefore keep low and be humble; and remember that the Diabolonians that kept not their first charge, but left their own standing, are now made prisoners in the pit. Be therefore content with thy station. I have made thee my father's vicegerent on earth in the things of which I have made mention before. Take thou power to teach them to Mansoul; yea, to impose them with whips and chastisements if they shall not willingly hearken to do thy commandments. . . . And one thing more to my beloved Mr. Recorder, and to all the town of Mansoul. You must not dwell in nor stay upon anything of that which he hath in commission to teach you, as to your trust and expectation of the next world. Of the next world, I say; for I purpose to give another to Mansoul when this is worn out. But for that you must wholly and solely have recourse to and make stay upon the doctrine of your teacher of the first order. Yea, Mr. Recorder himself must not look for life from that which he himself revealeth. His dependence for that must be founded in the doctrine of the other preacher. Let Mr. Recorder also take heed that he receive not any doctrine or points of doctrine that are not communicated to him by his superior teacher, nor yet within the precincts of his own formal knowledge."

Here, as a work of art, *The Holy War* should have its natural end. Mansoul had been created pure and happy. The devil plotted against it, took it, defiled it. The Lord of the town came to the rescue, drove the devil out, executed his officers and destroyed his works. Mansoul, according to Emmanuel's promise, was put into a better condition than that in which it was originally placed. New laws were drawn for it. New ministers were ap-

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pointed to execute them. Vice had been destroyed. Unbelief had been driven away. The future lay serene and bright before it; all trials and dangers being safely passed. Thus we have all the parts of a complete drama—the fair beginning, the perils, the struggles, and the final victory of good. At this point, for purposes of art, the curtain ought to fall.

For purposes of art—not, however, for purposes of truth; for the drama of Mansoul was still incomplete, and will remain incomplete till man puts on another nature or ceases altogether to be. Christianity might place him in a new relation to his Maker, and, according to Bunyan, might expel the devil out of his heart. But for practical purposes, as Mansoul too well knows, the devil is still in possession. At intervals—as in the first centuries of the Christian era, for a period in the middle ages, and again in Protestant countries for another period at the Reformation—mankind made noble efforts to drive him out, and make the law of God into reality. But he comes back again, and the world is again as it was. The vices again flourish which had been nailed to the Cross. The statesman finds it as little possible as ever to take moral right and justice for his rule in politics. The Evangelical preacher continues to confess and deplore the desperate wickedness of the human heart. The devil had been deposed, but his faithful subjects have restored him to his throne. The stone of Sisyphus has been brought to the brow of the hill only to rebound again to the bottom. The old battle has to be fought a second time, and, for all we can see, no closing victory will ever be in "this country of Universe." Bunyan knew this but too well. He tries to conceal it from himself by treating Mansoul alternately as the soul of a single individual from which

the devil may be so expelled as never dangerously to come back, or as the collective souls of the Christian world. But, let him mean which of the two he will, the overpowering fact remains that, from the point of view of his own theology, the great majority of mankind are the devil's servants through life, and are made over to him everlastinglly when their lives are over; while the human race itself continues to follow its idle amusements and its sinful pleasures as if no Emmanuel had ever come from heaven to rescue it. Thus the situation is incomplete, and the artistic treatment necessarily unsatisfactory—nay, in a sense even worse than unsatisfactory—for the attention of the reader, being reawakened by the fresh and lively treatment of the subject, refuses to be satisfied with conventional explanatory commonplaces. His mind is puzzled; his faith wavers in its dependence upon a Being who can permit His work to be spoilt, His power defied, His victories even, when won, made useless.

Thus we take up the continuation of *The Holy War* with a certain weariness and expectation of disappointment. The delivery of Mansoul has not been finished after all, and, for all that we can see, the struggle between Shaddai and Diabolus may go on to eternity. Emmanuel, before he withdraws his presence, warns the inhabitants that many Diabolonians are still lurking about the outside walls of the town.<sup>1</sup> The names are those in St. Paul's list—Fornication, Adultery, Murder, Anger, Lasciviousness, Deceit, Evil Eye, Drunkenness, Revelling, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Sedition, Heresy. If all these were still abroad, not much had been gained by the crucifixion of the Aldermen. For the time, it was

<sup>1</sup> The Flesh.

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true, they did not show themselves openly. Mansoul after the conquest was clothed in white linen, and was in a state of peace and glory. But the linen was speedily soiled again. Mr. Carnal Security became a great person in Mansoul. The Chief Secretary's functions fell early into abeyance. He discovered the Recorder and Lord Will be Will at dinner in Mr. Carnal Security's parlour, and ceased to communicate with them. Mr. Godly Fear sounded an alarm, and Mr. Carnal Security's house was burnt by the mob; but Mansoul's backslidings grew worse. It had its fits of repentance, and petitioned Emmanuel, but the messenger could have no admittance. The Lusts of the Flesh came out of their dens. They held a meeting in the room of Mr. Mischief, and wrote to invite Diabolus to return. Mr. Profane carried their letter to Hell Gate. Cerberus opened it, and a cry of joy ran through the prison. Beelzebub, Lucifer, Apollyon, and the rest of the devils came crowding to hear the news. Deadman's bell was rung. Diabolus addressed the assembly, putting them in hopes of recovering their prize. “Nor need you fear, he said, that if ever we get Mansoul again, we after that shall be cast out any more. It is the law of that Prince that now they own, that if we get them a second time they shall be ours forever.” He returned a warm answer to his friend, “which was subscribed as given at the Pit's mouth, by the joint consent of all the Princes of Darkness, by me, Diabolus.” The plan was to corrupt Mansoul's morals, and three devils of rank set off disguised to take service in the town, and make their way into the households of Mr. Mind, Mr. Godly Fear, and Lord Will be Will. Godly Fear discovered his mistake, and turned the devil out. The other two established themselves successfully, and Mr. Profane was soon at Hell Gate again to report progress.

Cerberus welcomed him with a "St. Mary, I am glad to see thee." Another council was held in Pandemonium, and Diabolus was impatient to show himself again on the scene. Apollyon advised him not to be in a hurry. "Let our friends," he said, "draw Mansoul more and more into sin—there is nothing like sin to devour Mansoul;" but Diabolus would not wait for so slow a process, and raised an army of Doubters "from the land of Doubting, on the confines of Hell Gate Hill." "Doubt," Bunyan always admitted, had been his own most dangerous enemy.

Happily the towns-people became aware of the peril which threatened them. Mr. Prywell, a great lover of Mansoul, overheard some Diabolonians talking about it at a place called Vile Hill. He carried his information to the Lord Mayor; the Recorder rang the Alarm Bell; Mansoul flew to penitence, held a day of fasting and humiliation, and prayed to Shaddai. The Diabolonians were hunted out, and all that could be found were killed. So far as haste and alarm would permit, Mansoul mended its ways. But on came the Doubting army, led by Incredulity, who had escaped crucifixion—"none was truer to Diabolus than he"—on they came under their several captains, Vocation Doubters, Grace Doubters, Salvation Doubters, &c.; figures now gone to shadow; then the deadliest foes of every English Puritan soul. Mansoul appealed passionately to the Chief Secretary; but the Chief Secretary "had been grieved," and would have nothing to say to it. The town legions went out to meet the invaders with good words, Prayer, and singing of Psalms. The Doubters replied with "horrible objections," which were frightfully effective. Lord Reason was wounded in the head, and the Lord Mayor in the eye; Mr. Mind received a shot in the stomach, and Conscience was hit near the

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heart; but the wounds were not mortal. Mansoul had the best of it in the first engagement. Terror was followed by boasting and self-confidence; a night sally was attempted—night being the time when the Doubters were strongest. The sally failed, and the men of Mansoul were turned to rout. Diabolus's army attacked Eargate, stormed the walls, forced their way into the town, and captured the whole of it except the castle. Then “Mansoul became a den of dragons, an emblem of Hell, a place of total darkness.” “Mr. Conscience's wounds so festered that he could have no rest day or night.” “Now a man might have walked for days together in Mansoul, and scarce have seen one in the town that looked like a religious man. Oh, the fearful state of Mansoul now!” “Now every corner swarmed with outlandish Doubters; Red Coats and Black Coats walked the town by clusters, and filled the houses with hideous noises, lying stories, and blasphemous language against Shaddai and his Son.”

This is evidently meant for fashionable London in the time of Charles II. Bunyan was loyal to the King. He was no believer in moral regeneration through political revolution. But none the less he could see what was under his eyes, and he knew what to think of it.

All was not lost, for the castle still held out. The only hope was in Emmanuel, and the garrison proposed to petition again in spite of the ill-reception of their first messengers. Godly Fear reminded them that no petition would be received which was not signed by the Lord Secretary, and that the Lord Secretary would sign nothing which he had not himself drawn up. The Lord Secretary, when appealed to in the proper manner, no longer refused his assistance. Captain Credence flew up to Shaddai's court with the simple words that Mansoul renounced all

trust in its own strength and relied upon its Saviour. This time its prayer would be heard.

The devils, meanwhile, triumphant though they were, discovered that they could have no permanent victory unless they could reduce the castle. "Doubters at a distance," Beelzebub said, "are but like objections repelled by arguments. Can we but get them into the hold, and make them possessors of that, the day will be our own." The object was, therefore, to corrupt Mansoul at the heart.

Then follows a very curious passage. Bunyan had still his eye on England, and had discerned the quarter from which her real danger would approach. Mansoul, the devil perceived, "was a market-town, much given to commerce." "It would be possible to dispose of some of the devil's wares there." The people would be filled full, and made rich, and would forget Emmanuel. "Mansoul," they said, "shall be so cumbered with abundance that they shall be forced to make their castle a warehouse." Wealth once made the first object of existence, "Diabolus's gang will have easy entrance, and the castle will be our own."

Political economy was still sleeping in the womb of futurity. Diabolus was unable to hasten its birth, and an experiment which Bunyan thought would certainly have succeeded was not to be tried. The *Deus ex Machina* appeared with its flaming sword. The Doubting army was cut to pieces, and Mansoul was saved. Again, however, the work was imperfectly done. Diabolus, like the bad genius in the fairy tale, survived for fresh mischief. Diabolus flew off again to Hell Gate, and was soon at the head of a new host; part composed of fugitive Doubters whom he rallied, and part of a new set of enemies called *Blood-men*, by whom we are to understand persecutors, "a people from a land that lay under the Dog Star." "Captain

Pope" was chief of the Bloodmen. His escutcheon "was the stake, the flame, and good men in it." The Bloodmen had done Diabolus wonderful service in time past. "Once they had forced Emmanuel out of the Kingdom of the Universe, and why, thought he, might they not do it again?"

Emmanuel did not this time go in person to the encounter. It was enough to send his captains. The Doubters fled at the first onset. "The Bloodmen, when they saw that no Emmanuel was in the field, concluded that no Emmanuel was in Mansoul. Wherefore, they, looking upon what the captains did to be, as they called it, a fruit of the extravagancy of their wild and foolish fancies, rather despised them than feared them." "They proved, nevertheless, chicken-hearted, when they saw themselves matched and equalled." The chiefs were taken prisoners, and brought to trial like Atheism and his companions, and so, with an address from the Prince, the story comes to a close.

Thus at last *The Holy War* ends, or seems to end. It is as if Bunyan had wished to show that though the converted Christian was still liable to the assaults of Satan, and even to be beaten down and overcome by him, his state was never afterwards so desperate as it had been before the redemption, and that he had assistance ready at hand to save him when near extremity. But the reader whose desire it is that good shall triumph, and evil be put to shame and overthrown, remains but partially satisfied; and the last conflict and its issues leave Mansoul still subject to fresh attacks. Diabolus was still at large. Carnal Sense broke prison, and continued to lurk in the town. Unbelief "was a nimble Jack: him they could never lay hold of, though they attempted to do it often." Unbelief remained in Mansoul till the time that Mansoul ceased to

dwell in the country of the Universe ; and where Unbelief was, Diabolus would not be without a friend to open the gates to him. Bunyan says, indeed, that "he was stoned as often as he showed himself in the streets." He shows himself in the streets much at his ease in these days of ours after two more centuries.

Here lies the real weakness of *The Holy War*. It may be looked at either as the war in the soul of each sinner that is saved, or as the war for the deliverance of humanity. Under the first aspect it leaves out of sight the large majority of mankind who are not supposed to be saved, and out of whom, therefore, Diabolus is not driven at all. Under the other aspect the struggle is still unfinished ; the last act of the drama has still to be played, and we know not what the conclusion is to be.

To attempt to represent it, therefore, as a work of art, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, is necessarily a failure. The mysteries and contradictions which the Christian revelation leaves unsolved are made tolerable to us by Hope. We are prepared to find in religion many things which we cannot understand ; and difficulties do not perplex us so long as they remain in a form to which we are accustomed. To emphasise the problem by offering it to us in an allegory, of which we are presumed to possess a key, serves only to revive Man Friday's question, or the old dilemma which neither intellect nor imagination has ever dealt with successfully. "Deus aut non vult tollere mala, aut nequit. Si non vult non est bonus. Si nequit non est omnipotens." It is wiser to confess with Butler that "there may be necessities in the nature of things which we are not acquainted with."

## CHAPTER IX.

### "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

If *The Holy War* is an unfit subject for allegorical treatment, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is no less perfectly adapted for it. *The Holy War* is a representation of the struggle of human nature with evil, and the struggle is left undecided. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a representation of the efforts of a single soul after holiness, which has its natural termination when the soul quits its mortal home and crosses the dark river. Each one of us has his own life-battle to fight out, his own sorrows and trials, his own failures or successes, and his own end. He wins the game, or he loses it. The account is wound up, and the curtain falls upon him. Here Bunyan had a material as excellent in itself as it was exactly suited to his peculiar genius; and his treatment of the subject from his own point of view—that of English Protestant Christianity—is unequalled, and never will be equalled. I may say never, for in this world of change the point of view alters fast, and never continues in one stay. As we are swept along the stream of time, lights and shadows shift their places, mountain plateaus turn to sharp peaks, mountain ranges dissolve into vapour. The river which has been gliding deep and slow along the plain, leaps suddenly over a precipice and plunges foaming down a sunless gorge.

In the midst of changing circumstances the central question remains the same—What am I? what is this world, in which I appear and disappear like a bubble? who made me? and what am I to do? Some answer or other the mind of man demands and insists on receiving. Theologian or poet offers, at long intervals, explanations which are accepted as credible for a time. They wear out, and another follows, and then another. Bunyan's answer has served average English men and women for two hundred years, but no human being with Bunyan's intellect and Bunyan's sincerity can again use similar language; and *The Pilgrim's Progress* is and will remain unique of its kind—an imperishable monument of the form in which the problem presented itself to a person of singular truthfulness, simplicity, and piety, who, after many struggles, accepted the Puritan creed as the adequate solution of it. It was composed exactly at the time when it was possible for such a book to come into being—the close of the period when the Puritan formula was a real belief, and was about to change from a living principle into an intellectual opinion. So long as a religion is fully alive, men do not talk about it or make allegories about it. They assume its truth as out of reach of question, and they simply obey its precepts as they obey the law of the land. It becomes a subject of art and discourse only when men are unconsciously ceasing to believe, and therefore the more vehemently think that they believe, and repudiate with indignation the suggestion that doubt has found its way into them. After this, religion no longer governs their lives. It governs only the language in which they express themselves, and they preserve it eagerly, in the shape of elaborate observances or in the agreeable forms of art and literature.

*The Pilgrim's Progress* was written before *The Holy War*, while Bunyan was still in prison at Bedford, and was but half conscious of the gifts which he possessed. It was written for his own entertainment, and therefore without the thought—so fatal in its effects and so hard to be resisted—of what the world would say about it. It was written in compulsory quiet, when he was comparatively unexcited by the effort of perpetual preaching, and the shapes of things could present themselves to him as they really were, undistorted by theological narrowness. It is the same story which he has told of himself in *Grace Abounding*, thrown out into an objective form.

He tells us himself, in a metrical introduction, the circumstances under which it was composed:—

"When at the first I took my pen in hand,  
Thus for to write, I did not understand  
That I at all should make a little book  
In such a mode. Nay, I had undertook  
To make another, which when almost done,  
Before I was aware I this begun.

"And thus it was: I writing of the way  
And race of saints in this our Gospel day,  
Fell suddenly into an Allegory  
About the journey and the way to glory  
In more than twenty things which I set down;  
This done, I twenty more had in my crown,  
And these again began to multiply,  
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.  
Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,  
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last  
Should prove *ad Infinitum*, and eat out  
The book that I already am about.

"Well, so I did; but yet I did not think  
To show to all the world my pen and ink

In such a mode. I only thought to make,  
I knew not what. Nor did I undertake  
Merely to please my neighbours ; no, not I.  
I did it mine own self to gratify.

"Neither did I but vacant seasons spend  
In this my scribble ; nor did I intend  
But to divert myself in doing this  
From worser thoughts which make me do amiss.  
Thus I set pen to paper with delight,  
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white ;  
For having now my method by the end,  
Still as I pulled it came ; and so I penned  
It down : until at last it came to be  
For length and breadth the bigness which you see.

"Well, when I had thus put my ends together,  
I showed them others, that I might see whether  
They would condemn them or them justify.  
And some said, Let them live ; some, Let them die ;  
Some said, John, print it ; others said, Not so ;  
Some said it might do good ; others said, No.

"Now was I in a strait, and did not see  
Which was the best thing to be done by me.  
At last I thought, since you are thus divided,  
I print it will ; and so the case decided."

The difference of opinion among Bunyan's friends is easily explicable. The allegoric representation of religion to men profoundly convinced of the truth of it might naturally seem light and fantastic, and the breadth of the conception could not please the narrow sectarians who knew no salvation beyond the lines of their peculiar formulas. The Pilgrim, though in a Puritan dress, is a genuine man. His experience is so truly human experience, that Christians of every persuasion can identify themselves with him ; and even those who regard Chris-

tianity itself as but a natural outgrowth of the conscience and intellect, and yet desire to live nobly and make the best of themselves, can recognise familiar footprints in every step of Christian's journey. Thus *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a book which, when once read, can never be forgotten. We too, every one of us, are pilgrims on the same road, and images and illustrations come back upon us from so faithful an itinerary, as we encounter similar trials, and learn for ourselves the accuracy with which Bunyan has described them. There is no occasion to follow a story minutely which memory can so universally supply. I need pause only at a few spots which are too charming to pass by.

How picturesque and vivid are the opening lines:

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where there was a den,<sup>1</sup> and I laid me down in that place to sleep, and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man, a man clothed in rags, standing with his face from his own home with a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back."

The man is Bunyan himself as we see him in *Grace Abounding*. His sins are the burden upon his back. He reads his book and weeps and trembles. He speaks of his fears to his friends and kindred. They think "some frenzy distemper has got into his head." He meets a man in the fields whose name is Evangelist. Evangelist tells him to flee from the City of Destruction. He shows him the way by which he must go, and points to the far-off light which will guide him to the wicket-gate. He sets off, and his neighbours of course think him mad. The world always thinks men mad who turn their backs upon

<sup>1</sup> The Bedford Prison.

it. Obstinate and Pliable (how well we know them both!) follow to persuade him to return. Obstinate talks practical common sense to him, and, as it has no effect, gives him up as a fantastical fellow. Pliable thinks that there may be something in what he says, and offers to go with him.

Before they can reach the wicket-gate they fall into a "miry slough." Who does not know the miry slough too? When a man begins for the first time to think seriously about himself, the first thing that rises before him is a consciousness of his miserable past life. Amendment seems to be desperate. He thinks it is too late to change for any useful purpose, and he sinks into despondency.

Pliable, finding the road disagreeable, has soon had enough of it. He scrambles out of the slough "on the side which was nearest to his own house" and goes home. Christian, struggling manfully, is lifted out "by a man whose name was Help," and goes on upon his journey, but the burden on his back weighs him down. He falls in with Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who lives in the town of Carnal Policy. Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who looks like a gentleman, advises him not to think about his sins. If he has done wrong he must alter his life and do better for the future. He directs him to a village called Morality, where he will find a gentleman well known in those parts, who will take his burden off—Mr. Legality. Either Mr. Legality will do it himself, or it can be done equally well by his pretty young son, Mr. Civility.

The way to a better life does not lie in a change of outward action, but in a changed heart. Legality soon passes into civility, according to the saying that vice loses half its evil when it loses its grossness. Bunyan would have said that the poison was the more deadly from being con-

cealed. Christian, after a near escape, is set straight again. He is admitted into the wicket-gate, and is directed how he is to go forward. He asks if he may not lose his way. He is answered Yes, "There are many ways (that) butt down on this, and they are crooked and wide. But thus thou mayest know the right from the wrong, that only being straight and narrow."

Good people often suppose that when a man is once "converted," as they call it, and has entered on a religious life, he will find everything made easy. He has turned to Christ, and in Christ he will find rest and pleasantness. The path of duty is unfortunately not strewed with flowers at all. The primrose road leads to the other place. As on all other journeys, to persevere is the difficulty. The pilgrim's feet grow sorer the longer he walks. His lower nature follows him like a shadow, watching opportunities to trip him up, and ever appearing in some new disguise. In the way of comfort he is allowed only certain resting-places, quiet intervals of peace when temptation is absent, and the mind can gather strength and encouragement from a sense of the progress which it has made.

The first of these resting-places at which Christian arrives is the "Interpreter's House." This means, I conceive, that he arrives at a right understanding of the objects of human desire as they really are. He learns to distinguish there between passion and patience, passion which demands immediate gratification, and patience which can wait and hope. He sees the action of grace on the heart, and sees the devil labouring to put it out. He sees the man in the iron cage who was once a flourishing professor, but had been tempted away by pleasure and had sinned against light. He hears a dream too—one of Bunyai's

own early dreams, but related as by another person. The Pilgrim himself was beyond the reach of such uneasy visions. But it shows how profoundly the terrible side of Christianity had seized on Bunyan's imagination, and how little he was able to forget it.

"This night as I was in my sleep I dreamed, and behold the heavens grew exceeding black; also it thundered and lightened in most fearful wise, that it put me into an agony; so I looked up in my dream and saw the clouds rack at an unusual rate, upon which I heard a great sound of a trumpet, and saw also a man sit upon a cloud attended with the thousands of heaven. They were all in a flaming fire, and the heaven also was in a burning flame. I heard then a voice, saying, Arise ye dead and come to judgment; and with that the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the dead that were therein came forth. Some of them were exceeding glad and looked upward; some sought to hide themselves under the mountains. Then I saw the man that sate upon the cloud open the book and bid the world draw near. Yet there was, by reason of a fierce flame that issued out and came from before him, a convenient distance betwixt him and them, as betwixt the judge and the prisoners at the bar. I heard it also proclaimed to them that attended on the man that sate on the cloud, Gather together the tares, the chaff, and the stubble, and cast them into the burning lake. And with that the bottomless pit opened just whereabouts I stood, out of the mouth of which there came in an abundant manner smoke and coals of fire with hideous noises. It was also said to the same persons, Gather the wheat into my garner. And with that I saw many catched up and carried away into the clouds, but I was left behind. I also sought to hide myself, but I could not, for the man that sate upon the

cloud still kept his eye upon me. My sins also came into my mind, and my conscience did accuse me on every side. I thought the day of judgment was come, and I was not ready for it."

The resting-time comes to an end. The Pilgrim gathers himself together, and proceeds upon his way. He is not to be burdened for ever with the sense of his sins. It fell from off his back at the sight of the cross. Three shining ones appear and tell him that his sins are forgiven; they take off his rags and provide him with a new suit.

He now encounters fellow-travellers; and the seriousness of the story is relieved by adventures and humorous conversations. At the bottom of a hill he finds three gentlemen asleep, "a little out of the way." These were Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. He tries to rouse them, but does not succeed. Presently two others are seen tumbling over the wall into the Narrow Way. They are come from the land of Vain Glory, and are called Formalist and Hypocrisy. Like the Pilgrim, they are bound for Mount Zion; but the wicket-gate was "too far about," and they had come by a short cut. "They had custom for it a thousand years and more; and custom being of so long standing, would be admitted legal by any impartial judge." Whether right or wrong, they insist that they are in the way, and no more is to be said. But they are soon out of it again. The hill is the hill Difficulty, and the road parts into three. Two go round the bottom, as modern engineers would make them. The other rises straight over the top. Formalist and Hypocrisy choose the easy ways, and are heard of no more. Pilgrim climbs up, and after various accidents comes to the second resting-place, the Palace Beautiful, built by the Lord of the Hill to entertain

strangers in. The recollections of Sir Bevis, of Southampton, furnished Bunyan with his framework. Lions guard the court. Fair ladies entertain him as if he had been a knight-errant in quest of the Holy Grail. The ladies, of course, are all that they ought to be: the Christian graces—Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity. He tells them his history. They ask him if he has brought none of his old belongings with him. He answers Yes, but greatly against his will: his inward and carnal cogitations, with which his countrymen, as well as himself, were so much delighted. Only in golden hours they seemed to leave him. Who cannot recognise the truth of this? Who has not groaned over the follies and idioties that cling to us like the doggerel verses that hang about our memories? The room in which he sleeps is called Peace. In the morning he is shown the curiosities, chiefly Scripture relics, in the palace. He is taken to the roof, from which he sees far off the outlines of the Delectable Mountains. Next, the ladies carry him to the armoury, and equip him for the dangers which lie next before him. He is to go down into the Valley of Humiliation, and pass thence through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Bunyan here shows the finest insight. To some pilgrims the Valley of Humiliation was the pleasantest part of the journey. Mr. Feeblemind, in the second part of the story, was happier there than anywhere. But Christian is Bunyan himself; and Bunyan had a stiff, self-willed nature, and had found his spirit the most stubborn part of him. Down here he encounters Apollyon himself, “ straddling quite over the whole breadth of the way”—“ a more effective devil than the Diabolus of *The Holy War*. He fights him for half a day, is sorely wounded in head, hand, and foot, and has a near escape of being pressed to death.

Apollyon spreads his bat wings at last, and flies away; but there remains the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the dark scene of lonely horrors. Two men meet him on the borders of it. They tell him the valley is full of spectres; and they warn him, if he values his life, to go back. Well Bunyan knew these spectres, those dreary misgivings that he was toiling after an illusion; that "good" and "evil" had no meaning except on earth, and for man's convenience; and that he himself was but a creature of a day, allowed a brief season of what is called existence, and then to pass away and be as if he had never been. It speaks well for Bunyan's honesty that this state of mind, which religious people generally call wicked, is placed directly in his Pilgrim's path, and he is compelled to pass through it. In the valley, close at the road-side, there is a pit, which is one of the mouths of hell. A wicked spirit whispers to him as he goes by. He imagines that the thought had proceeded out of his own heart.

The sky clears when he is beyond the gorge. Outside it are the caves where the two giants, Pope and Pagan, had lived in old times. Pagan had been dead many a day. Pope was still living, "but he had grown so crazy and stiff in his joints that he could now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they went by, and biting his nails because he could not come at them."

Here he overtakes Faithful, a true pilgrim like himself. Faithful had met with trials; but his trials have not resembled Christian's. Christian's difficulties, like Bunyan's own, had been all spiritual. "The lusts of the flesh" seem to have had no attraction for him. Faithful had been assailed by Wanton, and had been obliged to fly from her. He had not fallen into the slough; but he had been beguiled by the Old Adam, who offered him one of his daugh-

ters for a wife. In the Valley of the Shadow of Death he had found sunshine all the way. Doubts about the truth of religion had never troubled the simpler nature of the good Faithful.

Mr. Talkative is the next character introduced, and is one of the best figures which Bunyan has drawn; Mr. Talkative, with Scripture at his fingers' ends, and perfect master of all doctrinal subtleties, ready "to talk of things heavenly or things earthly, things moral or things evangelical, things sacred or things profane, things past or things to come, things foreign or things at home, things essential or things circumstantial, provided that all be done to our profit."

This gentleman would have taken in Faithful, who was awed by such a rush of volubility. Christian has seen him before, knows him well, and can describe him. "He is the son of one Saywell. He dwelt in Prating Row. He is for any company and for any talk. As he talks now with you, so will he talk when on the ale-bench. The more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart, or home, or conversation; all that he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith."

The elect, though they have ceased to be of the world, are still in the world. They are still part of the general community of mankind, and share, whether they like it or not, in the ordinary activities of life. Faithful and Christian have left the City of Destruction. They have shaken off from themselves all liking for idle pleasures. They nevertheless find themselves in their journey at Vanity Fair, "a fair set up by Beelzebub 5000 years ago." Trade of all sorts went on at Vanity Fair, and people of all sorts were collected there: cheats, fools, asses, knaves, and

rogues. Some were honest, many were dishonest; some lived peaceably and uprightly, others robbed, murdered, seduced their neighbours' wives or lied and perjured themselves. Vanity Fair was European society as it existed in the days of Charles II. Each nation was represented. There was British Row, French Row, and Spanish Row. "The wares of Rome and her merchandise were greatly promoted at the fair, only the English nation, with some others, had taken a dislike to them." The pilgrims appear on the scene as the Apostles appeared at Antioch and Rome, to tell the people that there were things in the world of more consequence than money and pleasure. The better sort listen. Public opinion in general calls them fools and Bedlamites. The fair becomes excited, disturbances are feared, and the authorities send to make inquiries. Authorities naturally disapprove of novelties; and Christian and Faithful are arrested, beaten, and put in the cage. Their friends insist that they have done no harm, that they are innocent strangers teaching only what will make men better instead of worse. A riot follows. The authorities determine to make an example of them, and the result is the ever-memorable trial of the two pilgrims. They are brought in irons before my Lord Hategood, charged with "disturbing the trade of the town, creating divisions, and making converts to their opinions in contempt of the law of the Prince."

Faithful begins with an admission which would have made it difficult for Hategood to let him off, for he says "the Prince they talked of, being Beelzebub, the enemy of the Lord, he defied him and all his angels. Three witnesses were then called: Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank.

Envy says that Faithful regards neither prince nor pop-

ple, but does all he can to possess men with disloyal notions, which he calls principles of faith and holiness.

Superstition says that he knows little of him, but has heard him say that "our religion is naught, and such by which no man can please God, from which saying his Lordship well knows will follow that we are yet in our sins, and finally shall be damned."

Pickthank deposes that he has heard Faithful rail on Beelzebub, and speak contemptuously of his honourable friends my Lord Old Man, my Lord Carnal Delight, my Lord Luxurious, my Lord Desire of Vain Glory, my Lord Lechery, Sir Having Greedy, and the rest of the nobility, besides which he has railed against his lordship on the bench himself, calling him an ungodly villain.

The evidence was perfectly true, and the prisoner, when called on for his defence, confirmed it. He says (avoiding the terms in which he was said to rail, and the like) that "the Prince of the town, with all the rabblement of his attendants by this gentleman named, are more fit for a being in hell than in this town or country."

Lord Hategood has been supposed to have been drawn from one or other of Charles II.'s judges, perhaps from either Twisden or Chester, who had the conversation with Bunyan's wife. But it is difficult to see how either one or the other could have acted otherwise than they did. Faithful might be quite right. Hell might be, and probably was, the proper place for Beelzebub, and for all persons holding authority under him. But as a matter of fact, a form of society did for some purpose or other exist, and had been permitted to exist for 5000 years, owning Beelzebub's sovereignty. It must defend itself, or must cease to be, and it could not be expected to make no effort at self-preservation. Faithful had come to Vanity Fair to

make a revolution—a revolution extremely desirable, but one which it was unreasonable to expect the constituted authorities to allow to go forward. It was not a case of false witness. A prisoner who admits that he has taught the people that their Prince ought to be in hell, and has called the judge an ungodly villain, cannot complain if he is accused of preaching rebellion.

Lord Hategood charges the jury, and explains the law. "There was an Act made," he says, "in the days of Pharaoh the Great, servant to our Prince, that lest those of a contrary religion should multiply and grow too strong for him, their males should be thrown into the river. There was also an Act made in the days of Nebuchadnezzar the Great, that whoever would not fall down and worship his golden image should be thrown into a fiery furnace. There was also an Act made in the days of Darius that whoso for some time called upon any God but him should be cast into the lion's den. Now the substance of these laws this rebel hath broken, not only in thought (which is not to be borne), but also in word and deed, which must, therefore, be intolerable. For that of Pharaoh, his law was made upon a supposition to prevent mischief, no crime being yet apparent. For the second and third you see his disputations against our religion, and for the treason he hath confessed he deserveth to die the death."

"Then went the jury out, whose names were Mr. Blindman, Mr. Nogood, Mr. Malice, Mr. Lovelust, Mr. Liveloose, Mr. Heady, Mr. Highmind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hatelight, and Mr. Implacable, who every one gave in his private verdict against him among themselves, and afterwards unanimously concluded to bring him in guilty before the judge. And first, Mr. Blindman, the

foreman, said : I see clearly that this man is a heretic. Then said Mr. Nogood, Away with such a fellow from the earth. Aye, said Mr. Malice, I hate the very looks of him. Then said Mr. Lovelust, I could never endure him. Nor I, said Mr. Liveloose, for he would always be condemning my way. Hang him, hang him, said Mr. Heady. A sorry scrub, said Mr. Highmind. My heart riseth against him, said Mr. Enmity. He is a rogue, said Mr. Liar. Hanging is too good for him, said Mr. Cruelty. Let us despatch him out of the way, said Mr. Hatelight. Then, said Mr. Implacable, might I have all the world given me, I could not be reconciled to him ; therefore, let us forthwith bring him in guilty of death."

Abstract qualities of character were never clothed in more substantial flesh and blood than these jurymen. Spenser's knights in the *Fairy Queen* are mere shadows to them. Faithful was, of course, condemned, scourged, buffeted, lanced in his feet with knives, stoned, stabbed, at last burned, and spared the pain of travelling further on the narrow road. A chariot and horses were waiting to bear him through the clouds, the nearest way to the Celestial Gate. Christian, who it seems had been remanded, contrives to escape. He is joined by Hopeful, a convert whom he has made in the town, and they pursue their journey in company. A second person is useful dramatically, and Hopeful takes Faithful's place. Leaving Vanity Fair, they are again on the Pilgrim's road. There they encounter Mr. Bye-ends. Bye-ends comes from the town of Plain-Speech, where he has a large kindred, My Lord Turnabout, my Lord Timeserver, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Two Tongues, the parson of the parish. Bye-ends himself was married to a daughter of Lady Feignings. Bunyan's invention in such things was inexhaustible.

They have more trials of the old kind with which Bunyan himself was so familiar. They cross the River of Life and even drink at it, yet for all this, and directly after, they stray into Bye-path Meadow. They lose themselves in the grounds of Doubting Castle, and are seized upon by Giant Despair—still a prey to doubt—still uncertain whether religion be not a dream, even after they have fought with wild beasts in Vanity Fair and have drunk of the water of life. Nowhere does Buayan show better how well he knew the heart of man. Christian even thinks of killing himself in the dungeons of Doubting Castle. Hopeful cheers him up; they break their prison, recover the road again, and arrive at the Delectable Mountains in Emmanuel's own land. There it might be thought the danger would be over, but it is not so. Even in Emmanuel's Land there is a door in the side of a hill which is a byway to hell, and beyond Emmanuel's Land is the country of conceit, a new and special temptation for those who think that they are near salvation. Here they encounter "a brisk lad of the neighbourhood," needed soon after for a particular purpose, who is a good liver, prays devoutly, fasts regularly, pays tithes punctually, and hopes that everyone will get to heaven by the religion which he professes, provided he fears God and tries to do his duty. The name of this brisk lad is Ignorance. Leaving him, they are caught in a net by Flatterer, and are smartly whipped by "a shining one," who lets them out of it. False ideas and vanity lay them open once more to their most dangerous enemy. They meet a man coming toward them from the direction in which they are going. They tell him that they are on the way to Mount Zion. He laughs scornfully, and answers:—

"There is no such place as you dream of in all the

world. When I was at home in my own country, I heard as you now affirm, and from hearing I went out to see; and have been seeking this city these twenty years, but I find no more of it than I did the first day I went out. I am going back again, and will seek to refresh myself with things which I then cast away for hopes of that which I now see is not."

Still uncertainty— even on the verge of eternity— strange, doubtless, and reprehensible to Eight Reverend persons, who never "cast away" anything; to whom a religious profession has been a highway to pleasure and preferment, who live in the comfortable assurance that as it has been in this life so it will be in the next. Only moral obliquity of the worst kind could admit a doubt about so excellent a religion as this. But Bunyan was not a Right Reverend. Christianity had brought him no palaces and large revenues, and a place among the great of the land. If Christianity was not true, his whole life was folly and illusion, and the dread that it might be so clung to his belief like its shadow.

The way was still long. The pilgrims reach the Enchanted Ground, and are drowsy and tired. Ignorance comes up with them again. He talks much about himself. He tells them of the good motives that come into his mind and comfort him as he walks. His heart tells him that he has left all for God and heaven. His belief and his life agree together, and he is humbly confident that his hopes are well-founded. When they speak to him of Salvation by Faith and Conviction by Sin, he cannot understand what they mean. As he leaves them they are reminded of one Temporary, "once a forward man in religion." Temporary dwelt in Graceless, "a town two miles from Honesty, next door to one Turnback." He

"was going on pilgrimage, but became acquainted with one Save Self, and was never more heard of."

These figures all mean something. They correspond in part to Bunyan's own recollection of his own trials. Partly he is indulging his humour by describing others who were more astray than he was. It was over at last: the pilgrims arrive at the land of Beulah, the beautiful sunset after the storms were all past. Doubting Castle can be seen no more, and between them and their last rest there remains only the deep river over which there is no bridge, the river of Death. On the hill beyond the waters glitter the towers and domes of the Celestial City; but through the river they must first pass, and they find it deeper or shallower according to the strength of their faith. They go through, Hopeful feeling the bottom all along; Christian still in character, not without some horror, and frightened by hobgoblins. On the other side they are received by angels, and are carried to their final home, to live for ever in the Prince's presence. Then follows the only passage which the present writer reads with regret in this admirable book. It is given to the self-righteous Ignorance, who, doubtless, had been provoking with "his good motives that comforted him as he walked;" but Bunyan's zeal might have been satisfied by inflicting a lighter chastisement upon him. He comes up to the river: he crosses without the difficulties which attended Christian and Hopeful. "It happened that there was then at the place one Vain Hope, a Ferryman, that with his boat" (some viaticum or priestly absolution) "helped him over." He ascends the hill, and approaches the city, but no angels are in attendance, "neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement." Above the gate there was the verse written—"Blessed are they that do His commandments,

that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gate into the city." Bunyan, who believed that no man could keep the commandments, and had no right to anything but damnation, must have introduced the words as if to mock the unhappy wretch who, after all, had tried to keep the commandments as well as most people, and was seeking admittance, with a conscience moderately at ease. "He was asked by the men that looked over the gate—Whence come you, and what would you have?" He answered, "I have eaten and drunk in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our street." Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the king. So he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, "Have you none?" But the man answered never a word. So they told the king; but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two shining ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the city, to go out and take Ignorance and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up and carried him through the air to the door in the side of the hill, and put him in there. "Then," so Bunyan ends, "I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction; so I awoke, and behold it was a dream!"

Poor Ignorance! Hell—such a place as Bunyan imagined hell to be—was a hard fate for a miserable mortal who had failed to comprehend the true conditions of justification. We are not told that he was a vain boaster. He could not have advanced so near to the door of heaven if he had not been really a decent man, though vain and silly. Behold, it was a dream! The dreams which come to us when sleep is deep on the soul may be sent direct

from some revealing power. When we are near waking, the supernatural insight may be refracted through human theory.

Charity will hope that the vision of Ignorance cast bound into the mouth of hell, when he was knocking at the gate of heaven, came through Homer's ivory gate, and that Bunyan here was a mistaken interpreter of the spiritual tradition. The fierce inferences of Puritan theology are no longer credible to us; yet nobler men than the Puritans are not to be found in all English history. It will be well if the clearer sight which enables us to detect their errors enables us also to recognise their excellence.

The second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, like most second parts, is but a feeble reverberation of the first. It is comforting, no doubt, to know that Christian's wife and children were not left to their fate in the City of Destruction. But Bunyan had given us all that he had to tell about the journey, and we do not need a repetition of it. Of course there are touches of genius. No writing of Bunyan's could be wholly without it. But the rough simplicity is gone, and instead of it there is a tone of sentiment which is almost mawkish. Giants, dragons, and angelic champions carry us into a spurious fairy-land, where the knight-errant is a preacher in disguise. Fair ladies and love matches, however decorously chastened, suit ill with the sternness of the moral conflict between the soul and sin. Christiana and her children are tolerated for the pilgrim's sake to whom they belong. Had they appealed to our interest on their own merits, we would have been contented to wish them well through their difficulties, and to trouble ourselves no further about them.

## CHAPTER X.

### LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

LITTLE remains to be told of Bunyan's concluding years. No friends preserved his letters. No diaries of his own survive to gratify curiosity. Men truly eminent think too meanly of themselves or their work to care much to be personally remembered. He lived for sixteen years after his release from the gaol, and those years were spent in the peaceful discharge of his congregational duties, in writing, in visiting the scattered members of the Baptist communion, or in preaching in the villages and woods. His outward circumstances were easy. He had a small but well-provided house in Bedford, into which he collected rare and valuable pieces of old furniture and plate, and other articles—presents, probably, from those who admired him. He visited London annually to preach in the Baptist churches. *The Pilgrim's Progress* spread his fame over England, over Europe, and over the American settlements. It was translated into many languages; and so catholic was its spirit, that it was adapted with a few alterations for the use even of the Catholics themselves. He abstained, as he had done steadily throughout his life, from all interference with politics, and the Government in turn never again meddled with him. He even received offers of promotion to larger spheres of action, which

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might have tempted a meaner nature. But he could never be induced to leave Bedford, and there he quietly stayed through changes of ministry, Popish plots, and Monmouth rebellions, while the terror of a restoration of Popery was bringing on the Revolution—careless of kings and cabinets, and confident that Giant Pope had lost his power for harm, and thenceforward could only bite his nails at the passing pilgrims. Once only, after the failure of the Exclusion Bill, he seems to have feared that violent measures might again be tried against him. It is even said that he was threatened with arrest, and it was on this occasion that he made over his property to his wife. The policy of James II., however, transparently treacherous though it was, for the time gave security to the Nonconformist congregations; and in the years which immediately preceded the final expulsion of the Stuarts, liberty of conscience was under fewer restrictions than it had been in the most rigorous days of the Reformation, or under the Long Parliament itself. Thus the anxiety passed away, and Bunyan was left undisturbed to finish his earthly work.

He was happy in his family. His blind child, for whom he had been so touchingly anxious, had died while he was in prison. His other children lived and did well; and his brave companion, who had spoken so stoutly for him to the judges, continued at his side. His health, it was said, had suffered from his confinement; but the only serious illness which we hear of was an attack of "sweating sickness," which came upon him in 1687, and from which he never thoroughly recovered. He was then fifty-nine, and in the next year he died.

His end was characteristic. It was brought on by exposure when he was engaged in an act of charity. A

quarrel had broken out in a family at Reading with which Bunyan had some acquaintance. A father had taken offence at his son, and threatened to disinherit him. Bunyan undertook a journey on horseback from Bedford to Reading in the hope of reconciling them. He succeeded, but at the cost of his life. Returning by London, he was overtaken on the road by a storm of rain, and was wetted through before he could find shelter. The chill, falling on a constitution already weakened by illness, brought on fever. He was able to reach the house of Mr. Strudwick, one his London friends; but he never left his bed afterwards. In ten days he was dead. The exact date is uncertain. It was towards the end of August, 1688, between two and three months before the landing of King William. He was buried in Mr. Strudwick's vault, in the Dissenters' burying-ground at Bunhill Fields. His last words were, "Take me, for I come to Thee."

So ended, at the age of sixty, a man who, if his importance may be measured by the influence which he has exerted over succeeding generations, must be counted among the most extraordinary persons whom England has produced. It has been the fashion to dwell on the disadvantages of his education, and to regret the carelessness of nature which brought into existence a man of genius in a tinker's hut at Elstow. Nature is less partial than she appears, and all situations in life have their compensations along with them.

Circumstances, I should say, qualified Bunyan perfectly well for the work which he had to do. If he had gone to school, as he said, with Aristotle and Plato; if he had been broken in at a university and been turned into a bishop; if he had been in any one of the learned professions, he might easily have lost, or might have never known,

the secret of his powers. He was born to be the Poet-apostle of the English middle classes, imperfectly educated like himself; and, being one of themselves, he had the key of their thoughts and feelings in his own heart. Like nine out of ten of his countrymen, he came into the world with no fortune but his industry. He had to work with his hands for his bread, and to advance by the side of his neighbours along the road of common business. His knowledge was scanty, though of rare quality. He knew his Bible probably by heart. He had studied history in Foxe's *Martyrs*, but nowhere else that we can trace. The rest of his mental furniture was gathered at first hand from his conscience, his life, and his occupations. Thus, every idea which he received falling into a soil naturally fertile, sprouted up fresh, vigorous, and original. He confessed to have felt (as a man of his powers could hardly have failed to feel) continued doubts about the Bible and the reality of the Divine government. It has been well said that when we look into the world to find the image of God, it is as if we were to stand before a looking-glass, expecting to see ourselves reflected there, and to see nothing. Education scarcely improves our perception in this respect; and wider information, wider acquaintance with the thoughts of other men in other ages and countries, might as easily have increased his difficulties as have assisted him in overcoming them. He was not a man who could have contented himself with compromises and half-convictions. No force could have subdued him into a decent Anglican divine—a "Mr. Two Tongues, parson of the parish." He was passionate and thorough-going. The authority of conscience presented itself to him only in the shape of religious obligation. Religion once shaken into a "perhaps," would have had no existence to him;

and it is easy to conceive a university-bred Bunyan, an intellectual meteor, flaring uselessly across the sky and disappearing in smoke and nothingness.

Powerful temperaments are necessarily intense. Bunyan, born a tinker, had heard right and wrong preached to him in the name of the Christian creed. He concluded after a struggle that Christianity was true, and on that conviction he built himself up into what he was. It might have been the same, perhaps, with Burns had he been born a century before. Given Christianity as an unquestionably true account of the situation and future prospects of man, the feature of it most appalling to the imagination is that hell-fire—a torment exceeding the most horrible which fancy can conceive, and extending into eternity—awaits the enormous majority of the human race. The dreadful probability seized hold on the young Bunyan's mind. He shuddered at it when awake. In the visions of the night it came before him in the tremendous details of the dreadful reality. It became the governing thought in his nature.

Such a belief, if it does not drive a man to madness, will at least cure him of trifling. It will clear his mind of false sentiment, take the nonsense out of him, and enable him to resist vulgar temptation as nothing else will. The danger is that the mind may not bear the strain, that the belief itself may crack and leave nothing. Bunyan was hardly tried, but in him the belief did not crack. It spread over his character. It filled him first with terror; then with a loathing of sin, which entailed so awful a penalty; then, as his personal fears were allayed by the recognition of Christ, it turned to tenderness and pity.

There was no fanaticism in Bunyan; nothing harsh or savage. His natural humour perhaps saved him. His

few recorded sayings all refer to the one central question ; but healthy seriousness often best expresses itself in playful quaintness. He was once going somewhere disguised as a waggoner. He was overtaken by a constable who had a warrant to arrest him. The constable asked him if he knew that devil of a fellow Bunyan. "Know I'm!" Bunyan said. "You might call him a devil if you knew him as well as I once did."

A Cambridge student was trying to show him what a divine thing reason was—"reason, the chief glory of man, which distinguished him from a beast," &c., &c.

Bunyan growled out: "Sin distinguishes man from beast. Is sin divine?"

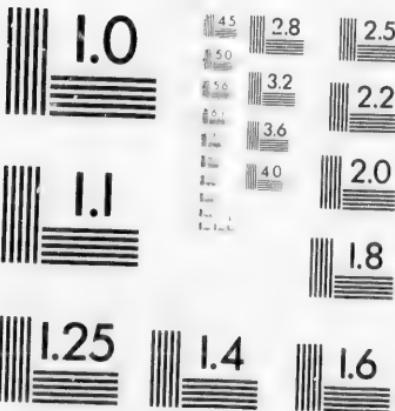
He was extremely tolerant in his terms of Church membership. He offended the stricter part of his congregation by refusing even to make infant baptism a condition of exclusion. The only persons with whom he declined to communicate were those whose lives were openly immoral. His chief objection to the Church of England was the admission of the ungodly to the Sacraments. He hated party titles and quarrels upon trifles. He desired himself to be called a Christian or a Believer, or "any name which was approved by the Holy Ghost." Divisions, he said, were to Churches like wars to countries. Those who talked most about religion cared least for it ; and controversies about doubtful things, and things of little moment, ate up all zeal for things which were practicable and indisputable.

"In countenance," wrote a friend, "he appeared to be of a stern and rough temper, but in his conversation mild and affable ; not given to loquacity or to much discourse in company unless some urgent occasion required it ; observing never to boast of himself or his parts, but rather to seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the



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judgment of others; abhorring lying and swearing; being just, in all that lay in his power, to his word; not seeming to revenge injuries; loving to reconcile differences and make friendships with all. He had a sharp, quick eye, with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit." "He was tall of stature, strong-boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip; his hair reddish, but in his later days time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending; his mouth moderate large, his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest."

He was himself indifferent to advancement, and he did not seek it for his family. A London merchant offered to take his son into his house. "God," he said, "did not send me to advance my family, but to preach the Gospel." He had no vanity—an exemption extremely rare in those who are personally much before the public. The personal popularity was in fact the part of his situation which he least liked. When he was to preach in London, "if there was but one day's notice the meeting-house was crowded to overflowing." Twelve hundred people would be found collected before seven o'clock on a dark winter's morning to hear a lecture from him. In Zoar Street, Southwark, his church was sometimes so crowded that he had to be lifted to the pulpit stairs over the congregation's heads. It pleased him, but he was on the watch against the pleasure of being himself admired. A friend complimented him once, after service, on "the sweet sermon" which he had delivered. "You need not remind me of that," he said. "The devil told me of it before I was out of the pulpit."

"Conviction of sin" has become a conventional phrase,

shallow and ineffective even in those who use it most sincerely. Yet moral evil is still the cause of nine-tenths of the misery in the world, and it is not easy to measure the value of a man who could prolong the conscious sense of the deadly nature of it, even under the forms of a decomposing theology. Times are changing. The intellectual current is bearing us we know not where, and the course of the stream is in a direction which leads us far from the conclusions in which Bunyan and the Puritans established themselves; but the truths which are most essential for us to know cannot be discerned by speculative arguments. Chemistry cannot tell us why some food is wholesome and other food is poisonous. That food is best for us which best nourishes the body into health and strength; and a belief in a Supernatural Power which has given us a law to live by, and to which we are responsible for our conduct, has alone, of all the influences known to us, succeeded in ennobling and elevating the character of man. The particular theories which men have formed about it have often been wild and extravagant. Imagination, agitated by fear or stimulated by pious enthusiasm, has peopled heaven with demigods and saints—creations of fancy, human forms projected upon a mist and magnified into celestial images. How much is true of all that men have believed in past times and have now ceased to believe, how much has been a too eager dream, no one now can tell. It may be that other foundations may be laid hereafter for human conduct on which an edifice can be raised no less fair and beautiful; but no signs of it are as yet apparent.

So far as we yet know, morality rests upon a sense of obligation; and obligation has no meaning except as implying a Divine command, without which it would

cease to be. Until "duty" can be presented to us in a shape which will compel our recognition of it with equal or superior force, the passing away of "the conviction of sin" can operate only to obscure our aspirations after a high ideal of life and character. The scientific theory may be correct, and it is possible that we may be standing on the verge of the most momentous intellectual revolution which has been experienced in the history of our race. It may be so, and also it may not be so. It may be that the most important factors in the scientific equation are beyond the reach of human intellect. However it be, the meat which gives strength to the man is poison to the child; and as yet we are still children, and are likely to remain children. "Every relief from outward restraint," says one who was not given to superstition, "if it be not attended with increased power of self-command, is simply fatal." Men of intelligence, therefore, to whom life is not a theory but a stern fact, conditioned round with endless possibilities of wrong and suffering, though they may never again adopt the letter of Bunyan's creed, will continue to see in conscience an authority for which culture is no substitute; they will conclude that in one form or other responsibility is not a fiction but a truth; and, so long as this conviction lasts, *The Pilgrim's Progress* will still be dear to all men of all creeds who share in it, even though it pleases the "elect" modern philosophers to describe its author as a "Philistine of genius."

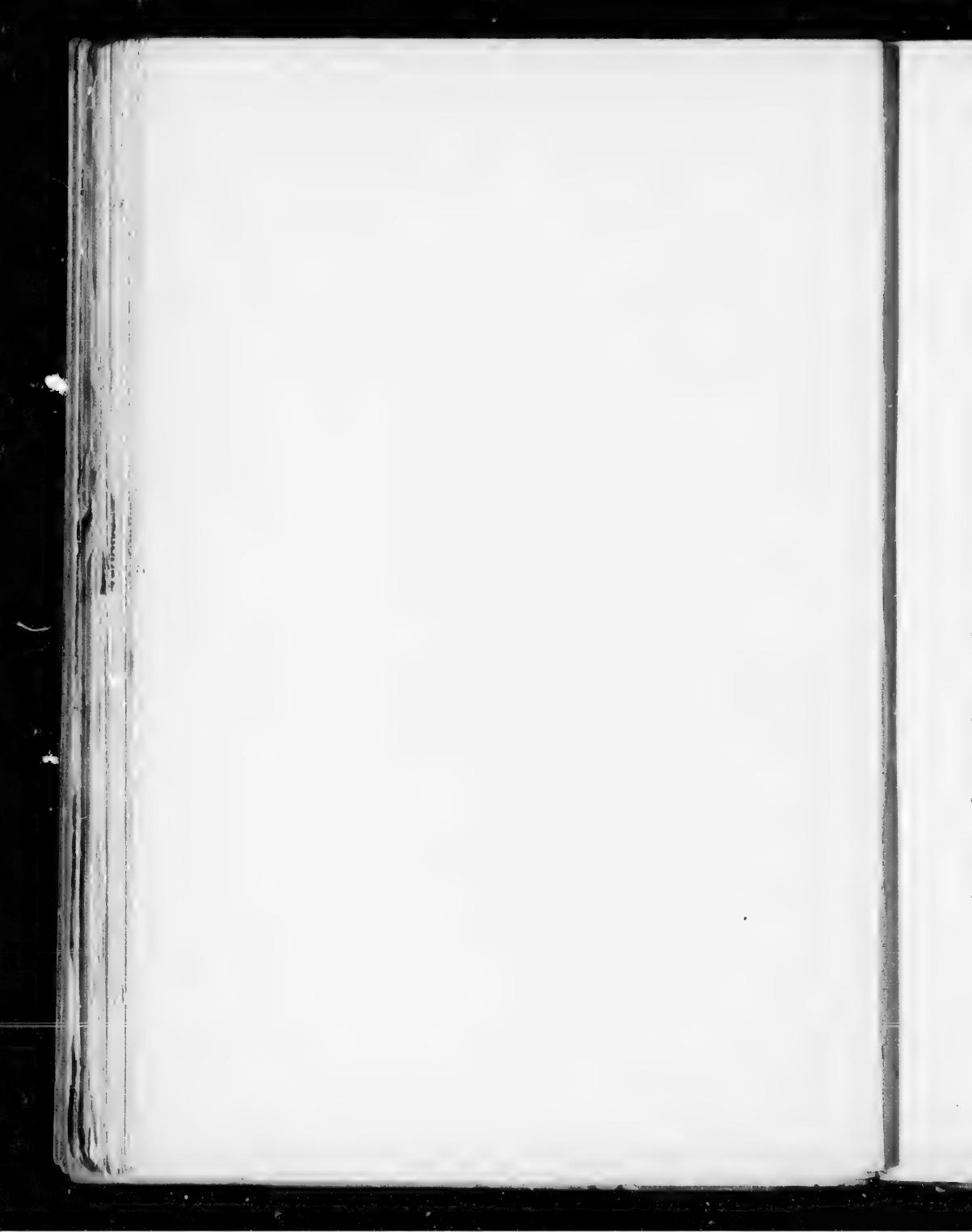
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# JOHNSON

BY

LESLIE STEPHEN



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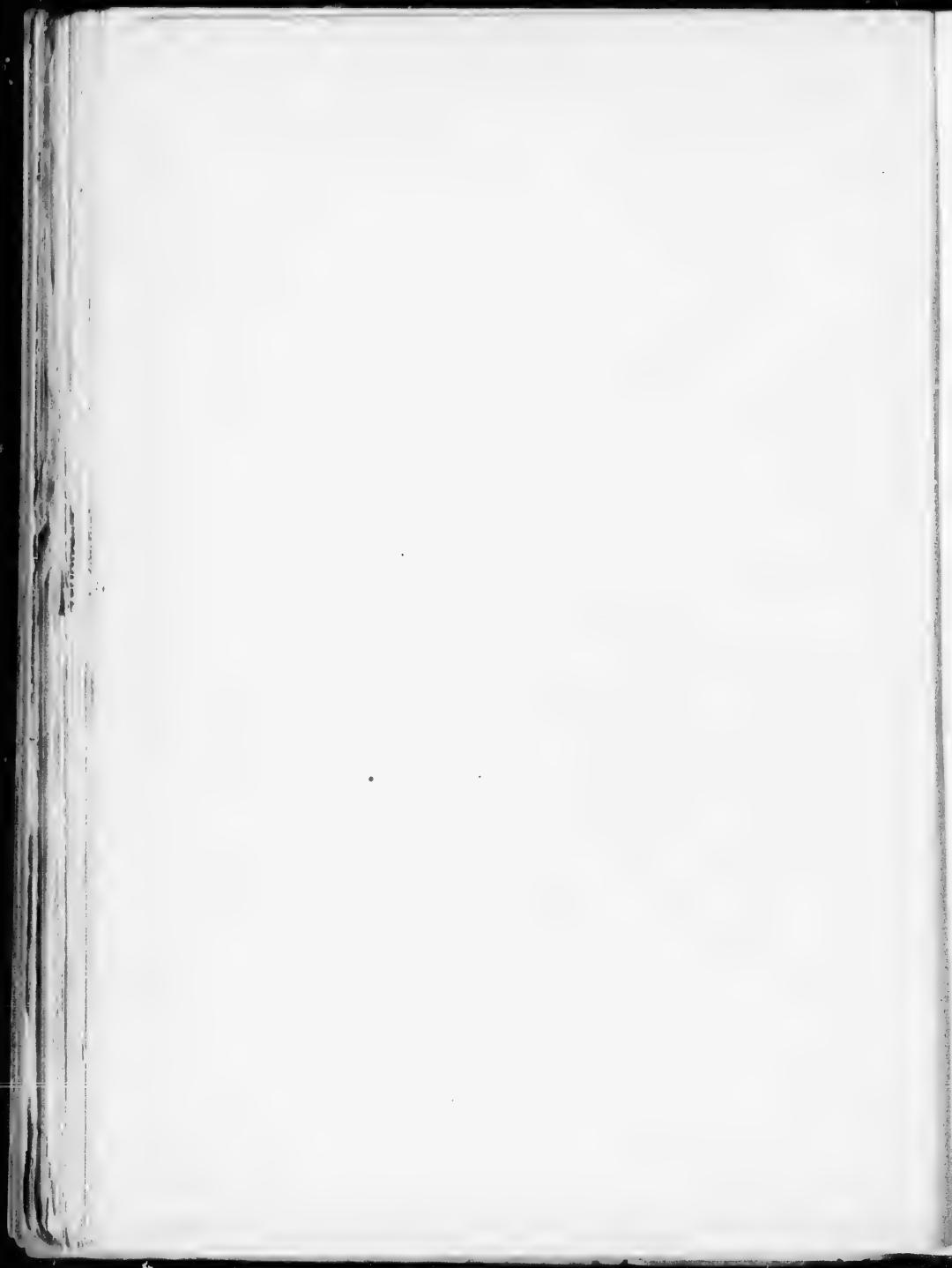
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# SAMUEL JOHNSON.

## CHAPTER I.

### CHILDHOOD AND EARLY LIFE.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born in Lichfield in 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller, highly respected by the cathedral clergy, and for a time sufficiently prosperous to be a magistrate of the town, and, in the year of his son's birth, sheriff of the county. He opened a bookstall on market-days at neighbouring towns, including Birmingham, which was as yet unable to maintain a separate bookseller. The tradesman often exaggerates the prejudices of the class whose wants he supplies, and Michael Johnson was probably a more devoted High Churchman and Tory than many of the cathedral clergy themselves. He reconciled himself with difficulty to taking the oaths against the exiled dynasty. He was a man of considerable mental and physical power, but tormented by hypochondriacal tendencies. His son inherited a share both of his constitution and of his principles. Long afterwards Samuel associated with his childish days a faint but solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and long black hood. The lady

was Queen Anne, to whom, in compliance with a superstition just dying a natural death, he had been taken by his mother to be touched for the king's evil. The touch was ineffectual. Perhaps, as Boswell suggested, he ought to have been presented to the genuine heirs of the Stuarts in Rome. Disease and superstition had thus stood by his cradle, and they never quitted him during life. The demon of hypochondria was always lying in wait for him, and could be exorcised for a time only by hard work or social excitement. Of this we shall hear enough; but it may be as well to sum up at once some of the physical characteristics which marked him through life and greatly influenced his career.

The disease had scarred and disfigured features otherwise regular and always impressive. It had seriously injured his eyes, entirely destroying, it seems, the sight of one. He could not, it is said, distinguish a friend's face half a yard off, and pictures were to him meaningless patches, in which he could never see the resemblance to their objects. The statement is perhaps exaggerated; for he could see enough to condemn a portrait of himself. He expressed some annoyance when Reynolds had painted him with a pen held close to his eye; and protested that he would not be handed down to posterity as "blinking Sam." It seems that habits of minute attention atoned in some degree for this natural defect. Boswell tells us how Johnson once corrected him as to the precise shape of a mountain; and Mrs. Thrale says that he was a close and exacting critic of ladies' dress, even to the accidental position of a riband. He could even lay down æsthetical canons upon such matters. He reproved her for wearing a dark dress as unsuitable to a "little creature." "What," he asked, "have not all insects gay colours?" His insen-

sibility to music was even more pronounced than his dulness of sight. On hearing it said, in praise of a musical performance, that it was in any case difficult, his feeling comment was, "I wish it had been impossible!"

The queer convulsions by which he amazed all beholders were probably connected with his disease, though he and Reynolds attributed them simply to habit. When entering a doorway with his blind companion, Miss Williams, he would suddenly desert her on the step in order to "whirl and twist about" in strange gesticulations. The performance partook of the nature of a superstitious ceremonial. He would stop in a street or the middle of a room to go through it correctly. Once he collected a laughing mob in Twickenham meadows by his antics; his hands imitating the motions of a jockey riding at full speed and his feet twisting in and out to make heels and toes touch alternately. He presently sat down and took out a *Grotius De Veritate*, over which he "seesawed" so violently that the mob ran back to see what was the matter. Once in such a fit he suddenly twisted off the shoe of a lady who sat by him. Sometimes he seemed to be obeying some hidden impulse, which commanded him to touch every post in a street or tread on the centre of every paving-stone, and would return if his task had not been accurately performed.

In spite of such oddities, he was not only possessed of physical power corresponding to his great height and massive stature, but was something of a proficient at athletic exercises. He was conversant with the theory, at least, of boxing; a knowledge probably acquired from an uncle who kept the ring at Smithfield for a year, and was never beaten in boxing or wrestling. His constitutional fearlessness would have made him a formidable antagonist.

Hawkins describes the oak staff, six feet in length and increasing from one to three inches in diameter, which lay ready to his hand when he expected an attack from Macpherson of Ossian celebrity. Once he is said to have taken up a chair at the theatre upon which a man had seated himself during his temporary absence, and to have tossed it and its occupant bodily into the pit. He would swim into pools said to be dangerous, beat huge dogs into peace, climb trees, and even run races and jump gates. Once at least he went out foxhunting, and though he despised the amusement, was deeply touched by the complimentary assertion that he rode as well as the most illiterate fellow in England. Perhaps the most whimsical of his performances was when, in his fifty-fifth year, he went to the top of a high hill with his friend Langton. "I have not had a roll for a long time," said the great lexicographer suddenly, and, after deliberately emptying his pockets, he laid himself parallel to the edge of the hill, and descended, turning over and over till he came to the bottom. We may believe, as Mrs. Thrale remarks upon his jumping over a stool to show that he was not tired by his hunting, that his performances in this kind were so strange and uncouth that a fear for the safety of his bones quenched the spectator's tendency to laugh.

In such a strange case was imprisoned one of the most vigorous intellects of the time. Vast strength hampered by clumsiness and associated with grievous disease, deep and massive powers of feeling limited by narrow though acute perceptions, were characteristic both of soul and body. These peculiarities were manifested from his early infancy. Miss Seward, a typical specimen of the provincial *précieuse*, attempted to trace them in an epitaph which he was said to have written at the age of three.

Here lies good master duck  
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on ;  
If it had lived, it had been good luck,  
For then we had had an odd one.

The verses, however, were really made by his father, who passed them off as the child's, and illustrate nothing but the paternal vanity. In fact the boy was regarded as something of an infant prodigy. His great powers of memory, characteristic of a mind singularly retentive of all impressions, were early developed. He seemed to learn by intuition. Indolence, as in his after life, alternated with brief efforts of strenuous exertion. His want of sight prevented him from sharing in the ordinary childish sports ; and one of his great pleasures was in reading old romances —a taste which he retained through life. Boys of this temperament are generally despised by their fellows ; but Johnson seems to have had the power of enforcing the respect of his companions. Three of the lads used to come for him in the morning and carry him in triumph to school, seated upon the shoulders of one and supported on each side by his companions.

After learning to read at a dame-school, and from a certain Tom Brown, of whom it is only recorded that he published a spelling-book and dedicated it to the Universe, young Samuel was sent to the Lichfield Grammar School, and was afterwards, for a short time, apparently in the character of pupil-teacher, at the school of Stourbridge, in Worcestershire. A good deal of Latin was "whipped into him," and though he complained of the excessive severity of two of his teachers, he was always a believer in the virtues of the rod. A child, he said, who is flogged, "gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas by exciting emulation and comparisons of superiority, you lay the

foundations of lasting mischief; you make brothers and sisters hate each other." In practice, indeed, this stern disciplinarian seems to have been specially indulgent to children. The memory of his own sorrows made him value their happiness, and he rejoiced greatly when he at last persuaded a schoolmaster to remit the old-fashioned holiday-task.

Johnson left school at sixteen and spent two years at home, probably in learning his father's business. This seems to have been the chief period of his studies. Long afterwards he said that he knew almost as much at eighteen as he did at the age of fifty-three—the date of the remark. His father's shop would give him many opportunities, and he devoured what came in his way with the indiscriminating eagerness of a young student. His intellectual resembled his physical appetite. He gorged books. He tore the hearts out of them, but did not study systematically. Do you read books through? he asked indignantly of some one who expected from him such supererogatory labour. His memory enabled him to accumulate great stores of a desultory and unsystematic knowledge. Somehow he became a fine Latin scholar, though never first-rate as a Grecian. The direction of his studies was partly determined by the discovery of a folio of Petrarch, lying on a shelf where he was looking for apples; and one of his earliest literary plans, never carried out, was an edition of Politian, with a history of Latin poetry from the time of Petrarch. When he went to the University at the end of this period, he was in possession of a very unusual amount of reading.

Meanwhile he was beginning to feel the pressure of poverty. His father's affairs were probably getting into disorder. One anecdote—it is one which it is difficult

to read without emotion—refers to this period. Many years afterwards, Johnson, worn by disease and the hard struggle of life, was staying at Lichfield, where a few old friends still survived, but in which every street must have revived the memories of the many who had long since gone over to the majority. He was missed one morning at breakfast, and did not return till supper-time. Then he told how his time had been passed. On that day fifty years before, his father, confined by illness, had begged him to take his place to sell books at a stall at Uttoxeter. Pride made him refuse. "To do away with the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a post-chaise to Uttoxeter, and going into the market at the time of high business, uncovered my head and stood with it bare an hour before the stall which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of the standers-by and the inclemency of the weather; a penance by which I trust I have propitiated Heaven for this only instance, I believe, of contumacy to my father." If the anecdote illustrates the touch of superstition in Johnson's mind, it reveals too that sacred depth of tenderness which ennobled his character. No repentance can ever wipe out the past or make it be as though it had not been; but the remorse of a fine character may be transmuted into a permanent source of nobler views of life and the world.

There are difficulties in determining the circumstances and duration of Johnson's stay at Oxford. He began residence at Pembroke College in 1728. It seems probable that he received some assistance from a gentleman whose son took him as companion, and from the clergy of Lichfield, to whom his father was known, and who were aware of the son's talents. Possibly his college assisted him during part of the time. It

is certain that he left without taking a degree, though he probably resided for nearly three years. It is certain, also, that his father's bankruptcy made his stay difficult, and that the period must have been one of trial.

The effect of the Oxford residence upon Johnson's mind was characteristic. The lad already suffered from the attacks of melancholy, which sometimes drove him to the borders of insanity. At Oxford, Law's *Serious Call* gave him the strong religious impressions which remained through life. But he does not seem to have been regarded as a gloomy or a religious youth by his contemporaries. When told in after years that he had been described as a "gay and frolicsome fellow," he replied, "Ah! sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power and all authority." Though a hearty supporter of authority in principle, Johnson was distinguished through life by the strongest spirit of personal independence and self-respect. He held, too, the sound doctrine, deplored by his respectable biographer Hawkins, that the scholar's life, like the Christian's, levelled all distinctions of rank. When an officious benefactor put a pair of new shoes at his door, he threw them away with indignation. He seems to have treated his tutors with a contempt which Boswell politely attributed to "great fortitude of mind," but Johnson himself set down as "stark insensibility." The life of a poor student is not, one may fear, even yet exempt from much bitterness, and in those days the position was far more servile than at present. The servitors and sizars had much to bear from richer companions. A proud melancholy lad, conscious of great powers, had

to meet with hard rebuffs, and tried to meet them by returning scorn for scorn.

Such distresses, however, did not shake Johnson's rooted Toryism. He fully imbibed, if he did not already share, the strongest prejudices of the place, and his misery never produced a revolt against the system, though it may have fostered insolence to individuals. Three of the most eminent men with whom Johnson came in contact in later life, had also been students at Oxford. Wesley, his senior by six years, was a fellow of Lincoln whilst Johnson was an undergraduate, and was learning at Oxford the necessity of rousing his countrymen from the religious lethargy into which they had sunk. "Have not pride and haughtiness of spirit, impatience, and peevishness, sloth and indolence, gluttony and sensuality, and even a proverbial uselessness been objected to us, perhaps not always by our enemies nor wholly without ground?" So said Wesley, preaching before the University of Oxford in 1744, and the words in his mouth imply more than the preacher's formality. Adam Smith, Johnson's junior by fourteen years, was so impressed by the utter indifference of Oxford authorities to their duties, as to find in it an admirable illustration of the consequences of the neglect of the true principles of supply and demand implied in the endowment of learning. Gibbon, his junior by twenty-eight years, passed at Oxford the "most idle and unprofitable" months of his whole life; and was, he said, as willing to disclaim the university for a mother, as she could be to renounce him for a son. Oxford, as judged by these men, was remarkable as an illustration of the spiritual and intellectual decadence of a body which at other times has been a centre of great movements of thought. Johnson, though his experience was rougher than any of the three,

loved Oxford as though she had not been a harsh step-mother to his youth. Sir, he said fondly of his college, “we are a nest of singing-birds.” Most of the strains are now pretty well forgotten, and some of them must at all times have been such as we scarcely associate with the nightingale. Johnson, however, cherished his college friendships, delighted in paying visits to his old university, and was deeply touched by the academical honours by which Oxford long afterwards recognized an eminence scarcely fostered by its protection. Far from sharing the doctrines of Adam Smith, he only regretted that the universities were not richer, and expressed a desire which will be understood by advocates of the “endowment of research,” that there were many places of a thousand a year at Oxford.

On leaving the University, in 1731, the world was all before him. His father died in the end of the year, and Johnson’s whole immediate inheritance was twenty pounds. Where was he to turn for daily bread? Even in those days, most gates were barred with gold and opened but to golden keys. The greatest chance for a poor man was probably through the Church. The career of Warburton, who rose from a similar position to a bishopric might have been rivalled by Johnson, and his connexions with Lichfield might, one would suppose, have helped him to a start. It would be easy to speculate upon causes which might have hindered such a career. In later life, he more than once refused to take orders upon the promise of a living. Johnson, as we know him, was a man of the world; though a religious man of the world. He represents the secular rather than the ecclesiastical type. So far as his mode of teaching goes, he is rather a disciple of Socrates than of St. Paul or Wesley. According to

him, a "tavern-chair" was "the throne of human felicity," and supplied a better arena than the pulpit for the utterance of his message to mankind. And, though his external circumstances doubtless determined his method, there was much in his character which made it congenial. Johnson's religious emotions were such as to make habitual reserve almost a sanitary necessity. They were deeply coloured by his constitutional melancholy. Fear of death and hell were prominent in his personal creed. To trade upon his feelings like a charlatan would have been abhorrent to his masculine character; and to give them full and frequent utterance like a genuine teacher of mankind would have been to imperil his sanity. If he had gone through the excitement of a Methodist conversion, he would probably have ended his days in a madhouse.

Such considerations, however, were not, one may guess, distinctly present to Johnson himself; and the offer of a college fellowship or of private patronage might probably have altered his career. He might have become a learned recluse or a struggling Parson Adams. College fellowships were less open to talent then than now, and patrons were never too propitious to the uncouth giant, who had to force his way by sheer labour, and fight for his own hand. Accordingly, the young scholar tried to coin his brains into money by the most depressing and least hopeful of employments. By becoming an usher in a school, he could at least turn his talents to account with little delay, and that was the most pressing consideration. By one schoolmaster he was rejected on the ground that his infirmities would excite the ridicule of the boys. Under another he passed some months of "complicated misery," and could never think of the school without horror and aversion. Finding this situation intolerable, he settled in Birmingham, in 1733.

to be near an old schoolfellow, named Hector, who was apparently beginning to practise as a surgeon. Johnson seems to have had some acquaintances among the comfortable families in the neighbourhood; but his means of living are obscure. Some small literary work came in his way. He contributed essays to a local paper, and translated a book of Travels in Abyssinia. For this, his first publication, he received five guineas. In 1734 he made certain overtures to Cave, a London publisher, of the result of which I shall have to speak presently. For the present it is pretty clear that the great problem of self-support had been very inadequately solved.

Having no money and no prospects, Johnson naturally married. The attractions of the lady were not very manifest to others than her husband. She was the widow of a Birmingham mercer named Porter. Her age at the time (1735) of the second marriage was forty-eight, the bridegroom being not quite twenty-six. The biographer's eye was not fixed upon Johnson till after his wife's death, and we have little in the way of authentic description of her person and character. Garrick, who had known her, said that she was very fat, with cheeks coloured both by paint and cordials, flimsy and fantastic in dress and affected in her manners. She is said to have treated her husband with some contempt, adopting the airs of an antiquated beauty, which he returned by elaborate deference. Garrick used his wonderful powers of mimicry to make fun of the uncouth caresses of the husband, and the courtly Beauclerc used to provoke the smiles of his audience by repeating Johnson's assertion that "it was a love-match on both sides." One incident of the wedding-day was ominous. As the newly-married couple rode back from church, Mrs. Johnson showed her

spirit by reproaching her husband for riding too fast, and then for lagging behind. Resolved "not to be made the slave of caprice," he pushed on briskly till he was fairly out of sight. When she rejoined him, as he, of course, took care that she should soon do, she was in tears. Mrs. Johnson apparently knew how to regain supremacy; but, at any rate, Johnson loved her devotedly during life, and clung to her memory during a widowhood of more than thirty years, as fondly as if they had been the most pattern hero and heroine of romantic fiction.

Whatever Mrs. Johnson's charms, she seems to have been a woman of good sense and some literary judgment. Johnson's grotesque appearance did not prevent her from saying to her daughter on their first introduction, "This is the most sensible man I ever met." Her praises were, we may believe, sweeter to him than those of the severest critics, or the most fervent of personal flatterers. Like all good men, Johnson loved good women, and liked to have on hand a flirtation or two, as warm as might be within the bounds of due decorum. But nothing affected his fidelity to his Letty or displaced her image in his mind. He remembered her in many solemn prayers, and such words as "this was dear Letty's book;" or, "this was a prayer which dear Letty was accustomed to say," were found written by him in many of her books of devotion.

Mrs. Johnson had one other recommendation—a fortune, namely, of £800—little enough, even then, as a provision for the support of the married pair, but enough to help Johnson to make a fresh start. In 1736, there appeared an advertisement in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. "At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages by Samuel Johnson." If, as seems probable, Mrs. Johnson's

money supplied the funds for this venture, it was an unlucky speculation.

Johnson was not fitted to be a pedagogue. Success in that profession implies skill in the management of pupils, but perhaps still more decidedly in the management of parents. Johnson had little qualifications in either way. As a teacher he would probably have been alternately despotic and over-indulgent; and, on the other hand, at a single glance the rough Dominie Sampson would be enough to frighten the ordinary parent off his premises. Very few pupils came, and they seem to have profited little, if a story as told of two of his pupils refers to this time. After some months of instruction in English history, he asked them who had destroyed the monasteries? One of them gave no answer; the other replied "Jesus Christ." Johnson, however, could boast of one eminent pupil in David Garrick, though, by Garrick's account, his master was of little service except as affording an excellent mark for his early powers of ridicule. The school, or "academy," failed after a year and a half; and Johnson, once more at a loss for employment, resolved to try the great experiment, made so often and so often unsuccessfully. He left Lichfield to seek his fortune in London. Garrick accompanied him, and the two brought a common letter of introduction to the master of an academy from Gilbert Walmsley, registrar of the Prerogative Court in Lichfield. Long afterwards Johnson took an opportunity in the *Lives of the Poets*, of expressing his warm regard for the memory of his early friend, to whom he had been recommended by a community of literary tastes, in spite of party differences and great inequality of age. Walmsley says in his letter, that "one Johnson" is about to accompany Garrick to London, in order to try his fate with a tragedy and get himself em-

ployed in translation. Johnson, he adds, "is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy writer."

The letter is dated March 2nd, 1737. Before recording what is known of his early career thus started, it will be well to take a glance at the general condition of the profession of Literature in England at this period.

## CHAPTER II.

## LITERARY CAREER.

"No man but a blockhead," said Johnson, "ever wrote except for money." The doctrine is, of course, perfectly outrageous, and specially calculated to shock people who like to keep it for their private use, instead of proclaiming it in public. But it is a good expression of that huge contempt for the foppery of high-flown sentiment which, as is not uncommon with Johnson, passes into something which would be cynical if it were not half-humorous. In this case it implies also the contempt of the professional for the amateur. Johnson despised gentlemen who dabbled in his craft, as a man whose life is devoted to music or painting despises the ladies and gentlemen who treat those arts as fashionable accomplishments. An author was, according to him, a man who turned out books as a brick-layer turns out houses or a tailor coats. So long as he supplied a good article and got a fair price, he was a fool to grumble, and a humbug to affect loftier motives.

Johnson was not the first professional author, in this sense, but perhaps the first man who made the profession respectable. The principal habitat of authors, in his age, was Grub Street—a region which, in later years, has ceased to be ashamed of itself, and has adopted the more pretentious

name Bohemia. The original Grub Street, it is said, first became associated with authorship during the increase of pamphlet literature, produced by the civil wars. Fox, the martyrologist, was one of its original inhabitants. Another of its heroes was a certain Mr. Welby, of whom the sole record is, that he "lived there forty years without being seen of any." In fact, it was a region of holes and corners, calculated to illustrate that great advantage of London life, which a friend of Boswell described by saying, that a man could there be always "close to his burrow." The "burrow" which received the luckless wight, was indeed no pleasant refuge. Since poor Green, in the earliest generation of dramatists, bought his "groat'sworth of wit with a million of repentance," too many of his brethren had trodden the path which led to hopeless misery or death in a tavern brawl. The history of men who had to support themselves by their pens, is a record of almost universal gloom. The names of Spenser, of Butler, and of Otway, are enough to remind us that even warm contemporary recognition was not enough to raise an author above the fear of dying in want of necessaries. The two great dictators of literature, Ben Jonson in the earlier and Dryden in the later part of the century, only kept their heads above water by help of the laureate's pittance, though reckless imprudence, encouraged by the precarious life, was the cause of much of their sufferings. Patronage gave but a trifling resource, and the author could hope at most but an occasional crust, flung to him from better provided tables.

In the happy days of Queen Anne, it is true, there had been a gleam of prosperity. Many authors, Addison, Congreve, Swift, and others of less name, had won by their pens not only temporary profits but permanent

places. The class which came into power at the Revolution was willing for a time, to share some of the public patronage with men distinguished for intellectual eminence. Patronage was liberal when the funds came out of other men's pockets. But, as the system of party government developed, it soon became evident that this involved a waste of power. There were enough political partisans to absorb all the comfortable sinecures to be had ; and such money as was still spent upon literature, was given in return for services equally degrading to giver and receiver. Nor did the patronage of literature reach the poor inhabitants of Grub Street. Addison's poetical power might suggest or justify the gift of a place from his elegant friends ; but a man like De Foe, who really looked to his pen for great part of his daily subsistence, was below the region of such prizes, and was obliged in later years not only to write inferior books for money, but to sell himself and act as a spy upon his fellows. One great man, it is true, made an independence by literature. Pope received some £8000 for his translation of Homer, by the then popular mode of subscription—a kind of compromise between the systems of patronage and public support. But his success caused little pleasure in Grub Street. No love was lost between the poet and the dwellers in this dismal region. Pope was its deadliest enemy, and carried on an internecine warfare with its inmates, which has enriched our language with a great satire, but which wasted his powers upon low objects, and tempted him into disgraceful artifices. The life of the unfortunate victims, pilloried in the *Dunciad* and accused of the unpardonable sins of poverty and dependence, was too often one which might have extorted sympathy even from a thin-skinned poet and critic.

Illustrations of the manners and customs of that Grub

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Street of which Johnson was to become an inmate are only too abundant. The best writers of the day could tell of hardships endured in that dismal region. Richardson went on the sound principle of keeping his shop that his shop might keep him. But the other great novelists of the century have painted from life the miseries of an author's existence. Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith have described the poor wretches with a vivid force which gives sadness to the reflection that each of those great men was drawing upon his own experience, and that they each died in distress. The *Case of Authors by Profession* to quote the title of a pamphlet by Ralph, was indeed a wretched one, when the greatest of their number had an incessant struggle to keep the wolf from the door. The life of an author resembled the proverbial existence of the flying-fish, chased by enemies in sea and in air; he only escaped from the slavery of the bookseller's garret, to fly from the bailiff or rot in the debtor's ward or the sponging-house. Many strange half-pathetic and half-ludicrous anecdotes survive to recall the sorrows and the recklessness of the luckless scribblers who, like one of Johnson's acquaintance, "lived in London and hung loose upon society."

There was Samuel Boyse, for example, whose poem on the *Deity* is quoted with high praise by Fielding. Once Johnson had generously exerted himself for his comrade in misery, and collected enough money by sixpences to get the poet's clothes out of pawn. Two days afterwards, Boyse had spent the money and was found in bed, covered only with a blanket, through two holes in which he passed his arms to write. Boyse, it appears, when still in this position would lay out his last half-guinea to buy truffles and mushrooms for his last scrap of beef. Of another scribbler Johnson said, "I honour Derrick for his strength of mind.

One night when Floyd (another poor author) was wandering about the streets at night, he found Derrick fast asleep upon a bulk. Upon being suddenly awaked, Derrick started up ; ‘ My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state ; will you go home with me to my *lodgings?* ’ Authors in such circumstances might be forced into such a wonderful contract as that which is reported to have been drawn up by one Gardner with Rolt and Christopher Smart. They were to write a monthly miscellany, sold at sixpence, and to have a third of the profits ; but they were to write nothing else, and the contract was to last for ninety-nine years. Johnson himself summed up the trade upon earth by the lines in which Virgil describes the entrance to hell ; thus translated by Dryden :—

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,  
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell.  
And pale diseases and repining age,  
Want, fear, and famine’s unresisted rage :  
Here toils and Death and Death’s half-brother, Sleep—  
Forms, terrible to view, their sentry keep.

“ Now,” said Johnson, “ almost all these apply exactly to an author ; these are the concomitants of a printing-house.”

Judicious authors, indeed, were learning how to make literature pay. Some of them belonged to the class who understood the great truth that the scissors are a very superior implement to the pen considered as a tool of literary trade. Such, for example, was that respectable Dr. John Campbell, whose parties Johnson ceased to frequent lest Scotchmen should say of any good bits of work, “ Ay, ay, he has learnt this of Cawmell.” Campbell, he said quaintly, was a good man, a pious man. “ I am afraid he

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has not been in the inside of a church for many years; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat. This shows he has good principles,"—of which in fact there seems to be some less questionable evidence. Campbell supported himself by writings chiefly of the Encyclopedia or Gazetteer kind; and became, still in Johnson's phrase, "the richest author that ever grazed the common of literature."

A more singular and less reputable character was that impudent quack, Sir John Hill, who, with his insolent attacks upon the Royal Society, pretentious botanical and medical compilations, plays, novels, and magazine articles, has long sunk into utter oblivion. It is said of him that he pursued every branch of literary quackery with greater contempt of character than any man of his time, and that he made as much as £1500 in a year;—three times as much, it is added, as any one writer ever made in the same period.

The political scribblers—the Arnalls, Gordons, Trenchards, Guthries, Ralphs, and Amhersts, whose names meet us in the notes to the *Dunciad* and in contemporary pamphlets and newspapers—form another variety of the class. Their general character may be estimated from Johnson's classification of the "Scribbler for a Party" with the "Commissioner of Excise," as the "two lowest of all human beings." "Ralph," says one of the notes to the *Dunciad*, "ended in the common sink of all such writers, a political newspaper." The prejudice against such employment has scarcely died out in our own day, and may be still traced in the account of Pendennis and his friend Warrington. People who do dirty work must be paid for it; and the Secret Committee which inquired into Walpole's administration reported that in ten years, from 1731 to 1741, a sum of £50,077 18s. had been paid to writers.

and printers of newspapers. Arnall, now remembered chiefly by Pope's line,—

Spirit of Arnall, aid me whilst I lie!

had received, in four years, £10,997 6s. 8d. of this amount. The more successful writers might look to pensions or preferment. Francis, for example, the translator of Horace, and the father, in all probability, of the most formidable of the whole tribe of such literary gladiators, received, it is said, 900*l.* a year for his work, besides being appointed to a rectory and the chaplaincy of Chelsea.

It must, moreover, be observed that the price of literary work was rising during the century, and that, in the latter half, considerable sums were received by successful writers. Religious as well as dramatic literature had begun to be commercially valuable. Baxter, in the previous century, made from 60*l.* to 80*l.* a year by his pen. The copyright of Tillotson's *Sermons* was sold, it is said, upon his death for £2500. Considerable sums were made by the plan of publishing by subscription. It is said that 4600 people subscribed to the two posthumous volumes of Conybeare's *Sermons*. A few poets trod in Pope's steps. Young made more than £3000 for the Satires called the *Universal Passion*, published, I think, on the same plan; and the Duke of Wharton is said, though the report is doubtful, to have given him £2000 for the same work. Gay made £1000 by his *Poems*; £400 for the copyright of the *Beggar's Opera*, and three times as much for its second part, *Polly*. Among historians, Hume seems to have received £700 a volume; Smollett made £2000 by his catchpenny rival publication; Henry made £3300 by his history; and Robertson, after the booksellers had made £6000 by his *History of Scotland*, sold his *Charles V.* for £4500.

Amongst the novelists, Fielding received £700 for *Tom Jones* and £1000 for *Amelia*; Sterne, for the second edition of the first part of *Tristram Shandy* and for two additional volumes, received £650; besides which Lord Fauconberg gave him a living (most inappropriate acknowledgment, one would say!), and Warburton a purse of gold. Goldsmith received 60 guineas for the immortal *Vicar*, a fair price, according to Johnson, for a work by a then unknown author. By each of his plays he made about £500, and for the eight volumes of his *Natural History* he received 800 guineas. Towards the end of the century, Mrs. Radcliffe got £500 for the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and £800 for her last work, the *Italian*. Perhaps the largest sum given for a single book was £6000 paid to Hawkesworth for his account of the South Sea Expeditions. Horne Tooke received from £4000 to £5000 for the *Diversions of Purley*; and it is added by his biographer, though it seems to be incredible, that Hayley received no less than £11,000 for the *Life of Cowper*. This was, of course, in the present century, when we are already approaching the period of Scott and Byron.

Such sums prove that some few authors might achieve independence by a successful work; and it is well to remember them in considering Johnson's life from the business point of view. Though he never grumbled at the booksellers, and on the contrary, was always ready to defend them as liberal men, he certainly failed, whether from carelessness or want of skill, to turn them to as much profit as many less celebrated rivals. Meanwhile, pecuniary success of this kind was beyond any reasonable hopes. A man who has to work like his own dependent Levett, and to make the "modest toil of every day" supply "the wants of every day," must discount his talents until he

can secure leisure for some more sustained effort. Johnson, coming up from the country to seek for work, could have but a slender prospect of rising above the ordinary level of his Grub Street companions and rivals. One publisher to whom he applied suggested to him that it would be his wisest course to buy a porter's knot and carry trunks ; and, in the struggle which followed, Johnson must sometimes have been tempted to regret that the advice was not taken.

The details of the ordeal through which he was now to pass have naturally vanished. Johnson, long afterwards, burst into tears on recalling the trials of this period. But, at the time, no one was interested in noting the history of an obscure literary drudge, and it has not been described by the sufferer himself. What we know is derived from a few letters and incidental references of Johnson in later days. On first arriving in London he was almost destitute, and had to join with Garrick in raising a loan of five pounds, which, we are glad to say, was repaid. He dined for eightpence at an ordinary : a cut of meat for sixpence, bread for a penny, and a penny to the waiter, making out the charge. One of his acquaintance had told him that a man might live in London for thirty pounds a year. Ten pounds would pay for clothes ; a garret might be hired for eighteen-pence a week ; if any one asked for an address, it was easy to reply, "I am to be found at such a place." Threepence laid out at a coffee-house would enable him to pass some hours a day in good company ; dinner might be had for sixpence, a bread-and-milk breakfast for a penny, and supper was superfluous. On clean shirt day you might go abroad and pay visits. This leaves a surplus of nearly one pound from the thirty.

Johnson, however, had a wife to support ; and to raise funds for even so ascetic a mode of existence required steady labour. Often, it seems, his purse was at the very lowest ebb. One of his letters to his employer is signed *inpransus*; and whether or not the dinnerless condition was in this case accidental, or significant of absolute impecuniosity, the less pleasant interpretation is not improbable. He would walk the streets all night with his friend, Savage, when their combined funds could not pay for a lodging. One night, as he told Sir Joshua Reynolds in later years, they thus perambulated St. James's Square, warning themselves by declaiming against Walpole, and nobly resolved that they would stand by their country.

Patriotic enthusiasm, however, as no one knew better than Johnson, is a poor substitute for bed and supper. Johnson suffered acutely and made some attempts to escape from his misery. To the end of his life, he was grateful to those who had lent him a helping hand. "Harry Hervey," he said of one of them shortly before his death, "was a vicious man, but very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him." Pope was impressed by the excellence of his first poem, *London*, and induced Lord Gower to write to a friend to beg Swift to obtain a degree for Johnson from the University of Dublin. The terms of this circuitous application, curious, as bringing into connexion three of the most eminent men of letters of the day, prove that the youngest of them was at the time (1739) in deep distress. The object of the degree was to qualify Johnson for a mastership of £60 a year, which would make him happy for life. He would rather, said Lord Gower, die upon the road to Dublin if an examination were necessary, "than be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his

only subsistence for some time past." The application failed, however, and the want of a degree was equally fatal to another application to be admitted to practise at Doctor's Commons.

Literature was thus perforce Johnson's sole support; and by literature was meant, for the most part, drudgery of the kind indicated by the phrase, "translating for booksellers." While still in Lichfield, Johnson had, as I have said, written to Cave, proposing to become a contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The letter was one of those which a modern editor receives by the dozen, and answers as perfunctorily as his conscience will allow. It seems, however, to have made some impression upon Cave, and possibly led to Johnson's employment by him on his first arrival in London. From 1738 he was employed both on the Magazine and in some jobs of translation.

Edward Cave, to whom we are thus introduced, was a man of some mark in the history of literature. Johnson always spoke of him with affection and afterwards wrote his life in complimentary terms. Cave, though a clumsy, phlegmatic person of little cultivation, seems to have been one of those men who, whilst destitute of real critical powers, have a certain instinct for recognizing the commercial value of literary wares. He had become by this time well-known as the publisher of a magazine which survives to this day. Journals containing summaries of passing events had already been started. Boyer's *Political State of Great Britain* began in 1711. *The Historical Register*, which added to a chronicle some literary notices, was started in 1716. *The Grub Street Journal* was another journal with fuller critical notices, which first appeared in 1730; and these two seem to have been superseded by the *Gentleman's Magazine*, started by Cave in the next year.

Johnson saw in it an opening for the employment of his literary talents ; and regarded its contributions with that awe so natural in youthful aspirants, and at once so comic and pathetic to writers of a little experience. The names of many of Cave's staff are preserved in a note to Hawkins. One or two of them, such as Birch and Akenside, have still a certain interest for students of literature ; but few have heard of the great Moses Browne, who was regarded as the great poetical light of the magazine. Johnson looked up to him as a leader in his craft, and was graciously taken by Cave to an alehouse in Clerkenwell, where, wrapped in a horseman's coat, and "a great bushy uncombed wig," he saw Mr. Browne sitting at the end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, and felt the satisfaction of a true hero-worshipper.

It is needless to describe in detail the literary task-work done by Johnson at this period, the Latin poems which he contributed in praise of Cave, and of Cave's friends, or the Jacobite squibs by which he relieved his anti-ministerialist feelings. One incident of the period doubtless refreshed the soul of many authors, who have shared Campbell's gratitude to Napoleon for the sole redeeming action of his life--the shooting of a bookseller. Johnson was employed by Osborne, a rough specimen of the trade, to make a catalogue of the Harleian Library. Osborne offensively reproved him for negligence, and Johnson knocked him down with a folio. The book with which the feat was performed (*Biblia Graeca Septuaginta, fol. 1594, Frankfort*) was in existence in a bookseller's shop at Cambridge in 1812, and should surely have been placed in some safe author's museum.

The most remarkable of Johnson's performances as a hack writer deserves a brief notice. He was one of the

first of reporters. Cave published such reports of the debates in Parliament as were then allowed by the jealousy of the Legislature, under the title of *The Senate of Lilliput*. Johnson was the author of the debates from Nov. 1740 to February 1742. Persons were employed to attend in the two Houses, who brought home notes of the speeches, which were then put into shape by Johnson. Long afterwards, at a dinner at Foote's, Francis (the father of Junius) mentioned a speech of Pitt's as the best he had ever read, and superior to anything in Demosthenes. Hereupon Johnson replied, "I wrote that speech in a garret in Exeter Street." When the company applauded not only his eloquence but his impartiality, Johnson replied, "That is not quite true; I saved appearances tolerably well, but I took care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it." The speeches passed for a time as accurate; though, in truth, it has been proved and it is easy to observe, that they are, in fact, very vague reflections of the original. The editors of Chesterfield's Works published two of the speeches, and, to Johnson's considerable amusement, declared that one of them resembled Demosthenes and the other Cicero. It is plain enough to the modern reader that, if so, both of the ancient orators must have written true Johnsonese; and, in fact, the style of the true author is often as plainly marked in many of these compositions as in the *Rambler* or *Rasselias*. For this deception, such as it was, Johnson expressed penitence at the end of his life, though he said that he had ceased to write when he found that they were taken as genuine. He would not be "accessory to the propagation of falsehood."

Another of Johnson's works which appeared in 1744 requires notice both for its intrinsic merit, and its auto-

biographical interest. The most remarkable of his *Crab Street* companions was the Richard Savage already mentioned. Johnson's life of him written soon after his death is one of his most forcible performances, and the best extant illustration of the life of the struggling authors of the time. Savage claimed to be the illegitimate son of the Countess of Macclesfield, who was divorced from her husband in the year of his birth on account of her connexion with his supposed father, Lord Rivers. According to the story, believed by Johnson, and published without her contradiction in the mother's lifetime, she not only disavowed her son, but cherished an unnatural hatred for him. She told his father that he was dead, in order that he might not be benefited by the father's will; she tried to have him kidnapped and sent to the plantations; and she did her best to prevent him from receiving a pardon when he had been sentenced to death for killing a man in a tavern brawl. However this may be, and there are reasons for doubt, the story was generally believed, and caused much sympathy for the supposed victim. Savage was at one time protected by the kindness of Steele, who published his story, and sometimes employed him as a literary assistant. When Steele became disgusted with him, he received generous help from the actor Wilks and from Mrs. Oldfield, to whom he had been introduced by some dramatic efforts. Then he was taken up by Lord Tyrconnel, but abandoned by him after a violent quarrel; he afterwards called himself a volunteer laureate, and received a pension of 50*l.* a year from Queen Caroline; on her death he was thrown into deep distress, and helped by a subscription to which Pope was the chief contributor, on condition of retiring to the country. Ultimately he quarrelled with his last protectors, and ended by dying in a debtor's prison.

Various poetical works, now utterly forgotten, obtained for him scanty profit. This career sufficiently reveals the character. Savage belonged to the very common type of men, who seem to employ their whole talents to throw away their chances in life, and to disgust every one who offers them a helping hand. He was, however, a man of some talent, though his poems are now hopelessly unreadable, and seems to have had a singular attraction for Johnson. The biography is curiously marked by Johnson's constant effort to put the best face upon faults, which he has too much love of truth to conceal. The explanation is, partly, that Johnson conceived himself to be avenging a victim of cruel oppression. "This mother," he says, after recording her vindictiveness, "is still alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting that the life, which she often endeavoured to destroy, was at last shortened by her maternal offices; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in the shop of a mechanic, or hasten the hand of the public executioner, she has yet had the satisfaction of embittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies that hurried on his death."

But it is also probable that Savage had a strong influence upon Johnson's mind at a very impressible part of his career. The young man, still ignorant of life and full of reverent enthusiasm for the literary magnates of his time, was impressed by the varied experience of his companion, and, it may be, flattered by his intimacy. Savage, he says admiringly, had enjoyed great opportunities of seeing the most conspicuous men of the day in their private life. He was shrewd and inquisitive enough to use his opportunities well. "More circumstances to constitute a critic on human life could not easily concur." The only phrase which survives

to justify this remark is Savage's statement about Walpole, that "the whole range of his mind was from obscenity to politics, and from politics to obscenity." We may, however, guess what was the special charm of the intercourse to Johnson. Savage was an expert in that science of human nature, learnt from experience not from books, upon which Johnson set so high a value, and of which he was destined to become the authorized expositor. There were, moreover, resemblances between the two men. They were both admired and sought out for their conversational powers. Savage, indeed, seems to have lived chiefly by the people who entertained him for talk, till he had disgusted them by his insolence and his utter disregard of time and propriety. He would, like Johnson, sit up talking beyond midnight, and next day decline to rise till dinner-time, though his favourite drink was not, like Johnson's, free from intoxicating properties. Both of them had a lofty pride, which Johnson heartily commends in Savage, though he has difficulty in palliating some of its manifestations. One of the stories reminds us of an anecdote already related of Johnson himself. Some clothes had been left for Savage at a coffeehouse by a person who, out of delicacy, concealed his name. Savage, however, resented some want of ceremony, and refused to enter the house again till the clothes had been removed.

What was honourable pride in Johnson was, indeed, simple arrogance in Savage. He asked favours, his biographer says, without submission, and resented refusal as an insult. He had too much pride to acknowledge, not too much to receive, obligations; enough to quarrel with his charitable benefactors, but not enough to make him rise to independence of their charity. His pension would have sufficed to keep him, only that as soon as he received it he

retired from the sight of all his acquaintance, and came back before long as penniless as before. This conduct, observes his biographer, was "very particular." It was hardly so singular as objectionable; and we are not surprised to be told that he was rather a "friend of goodness" than himself a good man. In short, we may say of him as Beauclerk said of a friend of Boswell's that, if he had excellent principles, he did not wear them out in practice.

There is something quaint about this picture of a thorough-paced scamp, admiringly painted by a virtuous man; forced, in spite of himself, to make it a likeness, and striving in vain to make it attractive. But it is also pathetic when we remember that Johnson shared some part at least of his hero's miseries. "On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the author of *The Wanderer*, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senators, and whose delicacy might have polished courts." Very shocking, no doubt, and yet hardly surprising under the circumstances! To us it is more interesting to remember that the author of the *Rambler* was not only a sympathizer, but a fellow-sufferer with the author of the *Wanderer*, and shared the queer "lodgings" of his friend, as Floyd shared the lodgings of Derrick. Johnson happily came unscathed through the ordeal which was too much for poor Savage, and could boast with perfect truth in later life that "no man, who ever lived by literature, had lived more independently than I have done." It was in so strange a school, and under such questionable teaching that Johnson formed his character of the world and of the con-

duct befitting its inmates. One characteristic conclusion is indicated in the opening passage of the life. It has always been observed, he says, that men eminent by nature or fortune are not generally happy: "whether it be that apparent superiority incites great designs, and great designs are naturally liable to fatal miscarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those, whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention, have been more carefully recorded because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent or more severe."

The last explanation was that which really commended itself to Johnson. Nobody had better reason to know that obscurity might conceal a misery as bitter as any that fell to the lot of the most eminent. The gloom due to his constitutional temperament was intensified by the sense that he and his wife were dependent upon the goodwill of a narrow and ignorant tradesman for the scantiest maintenance. How was he to reach some solid standing-ground above the hopeless mire of Grub Street? As a journeyman author he could make both ends meet, but only on condition of incessant labour. Illness and misfortune would mean constant dependence upon charity or bondage to creditors. To get ahead of the world it was necessary to distinguish himself in some way from the herd of needy competitors. He had come up from Lichfield with a play in his pocket, but the play did not seem at present to have much chance of emerging. Meanwhile he published a poem which did something to give him a general reputation.

*London*—an imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal—was published in May, 1738. The plan was doubtless suggested by Pope's imitations of Horace, which had

recently appeared. Though necessarily following the lines of Juvenal's poem, and conforming to the conventional fashion of the time, both in sentiment and versification, the poem has a biographical significance. It is indeed odd to find Johnson, who afterwards thought of London as a lover of his mistress, and who despised nothing more heartily than the cant of Rousseau and the sentimentalists, adopting in this poem the ordinary denunciations of the corruption of towns, and singing the praises of an innocent country life. Doubtless, the young writer was like other young men, taking up a strain still imitative and artificial. He has a quiet smile at Savage in the life, because in his retreat to Wales, that enthusiast declared that he "could not debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lose the opportunity of listening without intermission to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happiness of a country life." In *London*, this insincere cockney adopts Savage's view. Thales, who is generally supposed to represent Savage (and this coincidence seems to confirm the opinion), is to retire "from the dungeons of the Strand," and to end a healthy life in pruning walks and twining bowers in his garden.

There every bush with nature's music rings,  
There every breeze bears health upon its wings.

Johnson had not yet learnt the value of perfect sincerity even in poetry. But it must also be admitted that *London*, as seen by the poor drudge from a Grub Street garret, probably presented a prospect gloomy enough to make even Johnson long at times for rural solitude. The poem reflects, too, the ordinary talk of the heterogeneous band of patriots,

Jacobites, and disappointed Whigs, who were beginning to gather enough strength to threaten Walpole's long tenure of power. Many references to contemporary politics illustrate Johnson's sympathy with the inhabitants of the contemporary Cave of Adullam.

This poem, as already stated, attracted Pope's notice, who made a curious note on a scrap of paper sent with it to a friend. Johnson is described as "a man afflicted with an infirmity of the convulsive kind, that attacks him sometimes so as to make him a sad spectacle." This seems to have been the chief information obtained by Pope about the anonymous author, of whom he had said, on first reading the poem, this man will soon be *déterré*. *London* made a certain noise ; it reached a second edition in a week, and attracted various patrons, among others, General Oglethorpe, celebrated by Pope, and through a long life the warm friend of Johnson. One line, however, in the poem printed in capital letters, gives the moral which was doubtless most deeply felt by the author, and which did not lose its meaning in the years to come. This mournful truth, he says,—

Is everywhere confess'd,  
Slow rises worth by poverty depress'd.

Ten years later (in January, 1749) appeared the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, an imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. The difference in tone shows how deeply this and similar truths had been impressed upon its author in the interval. Though still an imitation, it is as significant as the most original work could be of Johnson's settled views of life. It was written at a white heat, as indeed Johnson wrote all his best work. Its strong Stoical morality, its profound and melancholy illustrations of the old and ever new sen-

timent, *Vanitas Vanitatum*, make it perhaps the most impressive poem of the kind in the language. The lines on the scholar's fate show that the iron had entered his soul in the interval. Should the scholar succeed beyond expectation in his labours and escape melancholy and disease, yet, he says,—

Yet hope not life from grief and danger free,  
Nor think the doom of man reversed on thee ;  
Design on the passing world to turn thine eyes  
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise ;  
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail ;  
See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,  
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.  
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend.  
**Hear Lydiat's** life and Galileo's end.

For the “patron,” Johnson had originally written the “garret.” The change was made after an experience of patronage to be presently described in connexion with the *Dictionary*.

For London Johnson received ten guineas, and for the *Vanity of Human Wishes* fifteen. Though indirectly valuable, as increasing his reputation, such work was not very profitable. The most promising career in a pecuniary sense was still to be found on the stage. Novelists were not yet the rivals of dramatists, and many authors had made enough by a successful play to float them through a year or two. Johnson had probably been determined by his knowledge of this fact to write the tragedy of *Irene*. No other excuse at least can be given for the composition of one of the heaviest and most unreadable of dramatic performances, interesting now, if interesting at all, solely as a curious example of the result of bestowing great powers upon a totally uncongenial task. Young men,

however, may be pardoned for such blunders if they are not repeated, and Johnson, though he seems to have retained a fondness for his unlucky performance, never indulged in playwriting after leaving Lichfield. The best thing connected with the play was Johnson's retort to his friend Walmsley, the Lichfield registrar. "How," asked Walmsley, "can you contrive to plunge your heroine into deeper calamity?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I can put her into the spiritual court." Even Boswell can only say for *Irene* that it is "entitled to the praise of superior excellence," and admits its entire absence of dramatic power. Garrick, who had become manager of Drury Lane, produced his friend's work in 1749. The play was carried through nine nights by Garrick's friendly zeal, so that the author had his three nights' profits. For this he received £195 17s. and for the copy he had £100. People probably attended, as they attend modern representations of legitimate drama, rather from a sense of duty, than in the hope of pleasure. The heroine originally had to speak two lines with a bowstring round her neck. The situation produced cries of murder, and she had to go off the stage alive. The objectionable passage was removed, but *Irene* was on the whole a failure, and has never, I imagine, made another appearance. When asked how he felt upon his ill-success, he replied "like the monument," and indeed he made it a principle throughout life to accept the decision of the public like a sensible man without murmurs.

Meanwhile, Johnson was already embarked upon an undertaking of a very different kind. In 1747 he had put forth a plan for an English Dictionary, addressed at the suggestion of Dodsley, to Lord Chesterfield, then Secretary of State, and the great contemporary Mæcenas. Johnson had apparently been maturing the scheme for

some time. "I know," he says in the "plan," that "the work in which I engaged is generally considered as drudgery for the blind, as the proper toil of artless industry, a book that requires neither the light of learning nor the activity of genius, but may be successfully performed without any higher quality than that of bearing burdens with dull patience, and beating the track of the alphabet with sluggish resolution." He adds in a sarcastic tone, that although princes and statesmen had once thought it honourable to patronize dictionaries, he had considered such benevolent acts to be "prodigies, recorded rather to raise wonder than expectation," and he was accordingly pleased and surprised to find that Chesterfield took an interest in his undertaking. He proceeds to lay down the general principles upon which he intends to frame his work, in order to invite timely suggestions and repress unreasonable expectations. At this time, humble as his aspirations might be, he took a view of the possibilities open to him which had to be lowered before the publication of the dictionary. He shared the illusion that a language might be "fixed" by making a catalogue of its words. In the preface which appeared with the completed work, he explains very sensibly the vanity of any such expectation. Whilst all human affairs are changing, it is, as he says, absurd to imagine that the language which repeats all human thoughts and feelings can remain unaltered.

A dic<sup>t</sup>ionary, as Johnson conceived it, was in fact work for a "harmless drudge," the definition of a lexicographer given in the book itself. Etymology in a scientific sense was as yet non-existent, and Johnson was not in this respect ahead of his contemporaries. To collect all the words in the language, to define their meanings as accurately as

might be, to give the obvious or whimsical guesses at Etymology suggested by previous writers, and to append a good collection of illustrative passages was the sum of his ambition. Any systematic training of the historical processes by which a particular language had been developed was unknown, and of course the result could not be anticipated. The work, indeed, required a keen logical faculty of definition, and wide reading of the English literature of the two preceding centuries ; but it could of course give no play either for the higher literary faculties on points of scientific investigation. A dictionary in Johnson's sense was the highest kind of work to which a literary journeyman could be set, but it was still work for a journeyman, not for an artist. He was not adding to literature, but providing a useful implement for future men of letters.

Johnson had thus got on hand the biggest job that could be well undertaken by a good workman in his humble craft. He was to receive fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds for the whole, and he expected to finish it in three years. The money, it is to be observed, was to satisfy not only Johnson but several copyists employed in the mechanical part of the work. It was advanced by instalments, and came to an end before the conclusion of the book. Indeed, it appeared when accounts were settled, that he had received a hundred pounds more than was due. He could, however, pay his way for the time, and would gain a reputation enough to ensure work in future. The period of extreme poverty had probably ended when Johnson got permanent employment on the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He was not elevated above the need of drudgery and economy, but he might at least be free from the dread of neglect. He could

command his market—such as it was. 'The necessity of steady labour was probably unfelt in repelling his fits of melancholy. His name was beginning to be known, and men of reputation were seeking his acquaintance. In the winter of 1749 he formed a club, which met weekly at a "famous beef-steak house" in Ivy Lane. Among its members were Hawkins, afterwards his biographer, and two friends, Bathurst a physician, and Hawkesworth an author, for the first of whom he entertained an unusually strong affection. The Club, like its more famous successor, gave Johnson an opportunity of displaying and improving his great conversational powers. He was already dreaded for his prowess in argument, his dictatorial manners and vivid flashes of wit and humour, the more effective from the habitual gloom and apparent heaviness of the dis-courser.

The talk of this society probably suggested topics for the *Rambler*, which appeared at this time, and caused Johnson's fame to spread further beyond the literary circles of London. The wit and humour have, indeed, left few traces upon its ponderous pages, for the *Rambler* marks the culminating period of Johnson's worst qualities of style. The pompous and involved language seems indeed to be a fit clothing for the melancholy reflections which are its chief staple, and in spite of its unmistakable power it is as heavy reading as the heavy class of lay-sermonizing to which it belongs. Such literature, however, is often strangely popular in England, and the *Rambler*, though its circulation was limited, gave to Johnson his position as a great practical moralist. He took his literary title one may say, from the *Rambler*, as the more familiar title was derived from the *Dictionary*.

The *Rambler* was published twice a week from March

20th, 1750, to March 14th, 1752. In five numbers alone he received assistance from friends, and one of these, written by Richardson, is said to have been the only number which had a large sale. The circulation rarely exceeded 500, though ten English editions were published in the author's lifetime, besides Scotch and Irish editions. The payment, however, namely, two guineas a number, must have been welcome to Johnson, and the friendship of many distinguished men of the time was a still more valuable reward. A quaint story illustrates the hero-worship of which Johnson now became the object. Dr. Burney, afterwards an intimate friend, had introduced himself to Johnson by letter in consequence of the *Rambler*, and the plan of the *Dictionary*. The admiration was shared by a friend of Burney's, a Mr. Bewley, known—in Norfolk at least—as the "philosopher of Massingham." When Burney at last gained the honour of a personal interview, he wished to procure some "relic" of Johnson for his friend. He cut off some bristles from a hearth-broom in the doctor's chambers, and sent them in a letter to his fellow-enthusiast. Long afterwards Johnson was pleased to hear of this simple-minded homage, and not only sent a copy of the *Lives of the Poets* to the rural philosopher, but deigned to grant him a personal interview.

Dearer than any such praise was the approval of Johnson's wife. She told him that, well as she had thought of him before, she had not considered him equal to such a performance. The voice that so charmed him was soon to be silenced for ever. Mrs. Johnson died (March 17th, 1752) three days after the appearance of the last *Rambler*. The man who has passed through such a trial knows well that, whatever may be in store for him in the dark future, fate can have no heavier blow in reserve. Though John-

son once acknowledged to Boswell, when in a placid humour, that happier days had come to him in his old age than in his early life, he would probably have added that though fame and friendship and freedom from the harrowing cares of poverty might cause his life to be more equably happy, yet their rewards could represent but a faint and mocking reflection of the best moments of a happy marriage. His strong mind and tender nature reeled under the blow. Here is one pathetic little note written to the friend, Dr. Taylor, who had come to him in his distress. That which first announced the calamity, and which, said Taylor, “expressed grief in the strongest manner he had ever read,” is lost.

“Dear Sir,—Let me have your company and instruction. Do not live away from me. My distress is great.

“Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and Miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

“Remember me in your prayers, for vain is the help of man.

“I am, dear sir,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

We need not regret that a veil is drawn over the details of the bitter agony of his passage through the valley of the shadow of death. It is enough to put down the wails which he wrote long afterwards when visibly approaching the close of all human emotions and interests:—

“This is the day on which, in 1752, dear Letty died. I have now uttered a prayer of repentance and contrition; perhaps Letty knows that I prayed for her. Perhaps Letty is now praying for me. God help me. Thou, God, art merciful, hear my prayers and enable me to trust in Thee.

"We were married almost seventeen years, and have now been parted thirty."

It seems half profane, even at this distance of time, to pry into grief so deep and so lasting. Johnson turned for relief to that which all sufferers know to be the only remedy for sorrow—hard labour. He set to work in his garret, an inconvenient room, "because," he said, "in that room only I never saw Mrs. Johnson." He helped his friend Hawkesworth in the *Adventurer*, a new periodical of the *Rambler* kind; but his main work was the *Dictionary*, which came out at last in 1755. Its appearance was the occasion of an explosion of wrath which marks an epoch in our literature. Johnson, as we have seen, had dedicated the Plan to Lord Chesterfield; and his language implies that they had been to some extent in personal communication. Chesterfield's fame is in curious antithesis to Johnson's. He was a man of great abilities, and seems to have deserved high credit for some parts of his statesmanship. As a Viceroy in Ireland in particular he showed qualities rare in his generation. To Johnson he was known as the nobleman who had a wide social influence as an acknowledged *arbiter elegantiarum*, and who reckoned among his claims some of that literary polish in which the earlier generation of nobles had certainly been superior to their successors. The art of life expounded in his *Letters* differs from Johnson as much as the elegant diplomatist differs from the rough intellectual gladiator of Grub Street. Johnson spoke his mind of his rival without reserve. "I thought," he said, "that this man had been a Lord among wits; but I find he is only a wit among Lords." And of the *Letters* he said more keenly that they taught the morals of a harlot and the manners of a dancing-master. Chesterfield's opinion of Johnson is indicated by the description

in his *Letters* of a “respectable Hottentot, who throws his meat anywhere but down his throat. This absurd person,” said Chesterfield, “was not only uncouth in manners and warm in dispute, but behaved exactly in the same way to superiors, equals, and inferiors; and therefore, by a necessary consequence, absurdly to two of the three. *Hinc illæ lacryma!*”

Johnson, in my opinion, was not far wrong in his judgment, though it would be a gross injustice to regard Chesterfield as nothing but a fribble. But men representing two such antithetic types were not likely to admire each other’s good qualities. Whatever had been the intercourse between them, Johnson was naturally annoyed when the dignified noble published two articles in the *World*—a periodical supported by such polite personages as himself and Horace Walpole—in which the need of a dictionary was set forth, and various courtly compliments described Johnson’s fitness for a dictatorship over the language. Nothing could be more prettily turned; but it meant, and Johnson took it to mean, I should like to have the dictionary dedicated to me: such a compliment would add a feather to my cap, and enable me to appear to the world as a patron of literature as well as an authority upon manners. “After making great professions,” as Johnson said, “he had, for many years, taken no notice of me; but when my *Dictionary* was coming out, he fell a scribbling in the *World* about it.” Johnson therefore bestowed upon the noble earl a piece of his mind in a letter which was not published till it came out in Boswell’s biography.

“My Lord,—I have been lately informed by the proprietor of the *World* that two papers, in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour

which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

" When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself, *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the arts of pleasing which a wearied and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

" Seven years, my lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward rooms and was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

" The shepherd in *Virgil* grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

" Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached the ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and

do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, should less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The letter is one of those knock-down blows to which no answer is possible, and upon which comment is superfluous. It was, as Mr. Carlyle calls it, "the far-famed blast of doom proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield and through him, of the listening world, that patronage should be no more."

That is all that can be said; yet perhaps it should be added that Johnson remarked that he had once received £10 from Chesterfield, though he thought the assistance too inconsiderable to be mentioned in such a letter. Hawkins also states that Chesterfield sent overtures to Johnson through two friends, one of whom, long Sir Thomas Robinson, stated that, if he were rich enough (a judicious clause) he would himself settle £500 a year upon Johnson. Johnson replied that if the first peer of the realm made such an offer, he would show him the way downstairs. Hawkins is startled at this insolence, and at Johnson's uniform assertion that an offer of money was an insult. We cannot tell what was the history of the £10; but Johnson, in spite of Hawkins's righteous indignation, was in fact too

proud to be a beggar, and owed to his pride his escape from the fate of Savage.

The appearance of the *Dictionary* placed Johnson in the position described soon afterwards by Smollett. He was henceforth "the great Cham of Literature"—a monarch sitting in the chair previously occupied by his namesake, Ben, by Dryden, and by Pope ; but which has since that time been vacant. The world of literature has become too large for such authority. Complaints were not seldom uttered at the time. Goldsmith has urged that Boswell wished to make a monarchy of what ought to be a republic. Goldsmith, who would have been the last man to find serious fault with the dictator, thought the dictatorship objectionable. Some time indeed was still to elapse before we can say that Johnson was firmly seated on the throne ; but the *Dictionary* and the *Rambler* had given him a position not altogether easy to appreciate, now that the *Dictionary* has been superseded and the *Rambler* gone out of fashion. His name was the highest at this time (1755) in the ranks of pure literature. The fame of Warburton possibly bulked larger for the moment, and one of his flatterers was comparing him to the Colossus which strides the petty world of contemporaries. But Warburton had subsided into episcopal repose, and literature had been for him a stepping-stone rather than an ultimate aim. Hume had written works of far more enduring influence than Johnson ; but they were little read though generally abused, and scarcely belong to the purely literary history. The first volume of his *History of England* had appeared (1754), but had not succeeded. The second was just coming out. Richardson was still giving laws to his little seraglio of adoring women; Fielding had died (1754), worn out by labour and dissipation ; Smollett was active in the literary

trade, but not in such a way as to increase his own dignity or that of his employment; Gray was slowly writing a few lines of exquisite verse in his retirement at Cambridge; two young Irish adventurers, Burke and Goldsmith, were just coming to London to try their fortune; Adam Smith made his first experiment as an author by reviewing the *Dictionary* in the *Edinburgh Review*; Robertson had not yet appeared as a historian; Gibbon was at Lausanne repenting of his old brief lapse into Catholicism as an act of undergraduate's folly; and Cowper, after three years of "giggling and making giggle" with Thurlow in an attorney's office, was now entered at the Temple and amusing himself at times with literature in company with such small men of letters as Colman, Bonnell Thornton, and Lloyd. It was a slack tide of literature; the generation of Pope had passed away and left no successors, and no writer of the time could be put in competition with the giant now known as "Dictionary Johnson."

When the last sheet of the *Dictionary* had been carried to the publisher, Millar, Johnson asked the messenger, "What did he say?" "Sir," said the messenger, "he said, 'Thank God I have done with him.'" "I am glad," replied Johnson, "that he thanks God for anything." Thankfulness for relief from seven years' toil seems to have been Johnson's predominant feeling: and he was not anxious for a time to take any new labours upon his shoulders. Some years passed which have left few traces either upon his personal or his literary history. He contributed a good many reviews in 1756-7 to the *Literary Magazine*, one of which, a review of Soame Jenyns, is amongst his best performances. To a weekly paper he contributed for two years, from April, 1758, to April, 1760, a set of essays called the *Idler*, on the old *Rambler* plan. He did some

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small literary cobbler's work, receiving a guinea for a prospectus to a newspaper and ten pounds for correcting a volume of poetry. He had advertised in 1756 a new edition of Shakspeare which was to appear by Christmas, 1757 : but he dawdled over it so unconscionably that it did not appear for nine years ; and then only in consequence of taunts from Churchill, who accused him with too much plausibility of cheating his subscribers.

He for subscribers baits his hook ;  
And takes your cash : but where's the book ?  
No matter where ; wise fear, you know  
Forbids the robbing of a foe ;  
But what to serve our private ends  
Forbids the cheating of our friends ?

In truth, his constitutional indolence seems to have gained advantages over him, when the stimulus of a heavy task was removed. In his meditations, there are many complaints of his "sluggishness" and resolutions of amendment. "A kind of strange oblivion has spread over me," he says in April, 1764, "so that I know not what has become of the last years, and perceive that incidents and intelligence pass over me without leaving any impression."

It seems, however, that he was still frequently in difficulties. Letters are preserved showing that in the beginning of 1756, Richardson became surety for him for a debt, and lent him six guineas to release him from arrest. An event which happened three years later illustrates his position and character. In January, 1759, his mother died at the age of ninety. Johnson was unable to come to Lichfield, and some deeply pathetic letters to her and her stepdaughter, who lived with her, record his emotions. Here is the last sad farewell upon the snapping of the most sacred of human ties.

"Dear Honoured Mother," he says in a letter enclosed to Lucy Porter, the step-daughter, "neither your condition nor your character make it fit for me to say much. You have been the best mother, and I believe the best woman in the world. I thank you for your indulgence to me, and beg forgiveness of all that I have done ill, and of all that I have omitted to do well. God grant you His Holy Spirit, and receive you to everlasting happiness for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Lord Jesus receive your spirit. I am, dear, dear mother,

"Your dutiful son,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

Johnson managed to raise twelve guineas, six of them borrowed from his printer, to send to his dying mother. In order to gain money for her funeral expenses and some small debts, he wrote the story of *Rasselas*. It was composed in the evenings of a single week, and sent to press as it was written. He received £100 for this, perhaps the most successful of his minor writings, and £25 for a second edition. It was widely translated and universally admired. One of the strangest of literary coincidences is the contemporary appearance of this work and Voltaire's *Candide*; to which, indeed, it bears in some respects so strong a resemblance that, but for Johnson's apparent contradiction, we would suppose that he had at least heard some description of its design. The two stories, though widely differing in tone and style, are among the most powerful expressions of the melancholy produced in strong intellects by the sadness and sorrows of the world. The literary excellence of *Candide* has secured for it a wider and more enduring popularity than has fallen to the lot of Johnson's far heavier production. But

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*Rasselas* is a book of singular force, and bears the most characteristic impression of Johnson's peculiar temperament.

A great change was approaching in Johnson's circumstances. When George III. came to the throne, it struck some of his advisers that it would be well, as Boswell puts it, to open "a new and brighter prospect to men of literary merit." This commendable design was carried out by offering to Johnson a pension of three hundred a year. Considering that such men as Horace Walpole and his like were enjoying sinecures of more than twice as many thousands for being their father's sons, the bounty does not strike one as excessively liberal. It seems to have been really intended as some set-off against other pensions bestowed upon various hangers-on of the Scotch prime minister, Bute. Johnson was coupled with the contemptible scribbler, Shebbeare, who had lately been in the pillory for a Jacobite libel (a "he-bear" and a "she-bear," said the facetious newspapers), and when a few months afterwards a pension of £200 a year was given to the old actor, Sheridan, Johnson growled out that it was time for him to resign his own. Somebody kindly repeated the remark to Sheridan, who would never afterwards speak to Johnson.

The pension, though very welcome to Johnson, who seems to have been in real distress at the time, suggested some difficulty. Johnson had unluckily spoken of a pension in his *Dictionary* as "generally understood to mean pay given to a State hireling for treason to his country." He was assured, however, that he did not come within the definition; and that the reward was given for what he had done, not for anything that he was expected to do. After some hesitation, Johnson consented to accept the

payment thus offered without the direct suggestion of any obligation, though it was probably calculated that he would in case of need, be the more ready, as actually happened, to use his pen in defence of authority. He had not compromised his independence and might fairly laugh at angry comments. "I wish," he said afterwards, "that my pension were twice as large, that they might make twice as much noise." "I cannot now curse the House of Hanover," was his phrase on another occasion: "but I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover and drinking King James's health, all amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year." In truth, his Jacobitism was by this time, whatever it had once been, nothing more than a humorous crotchet, giving opportunity for the expression of Tory prejudice.

"I hope you will now purge and live cleanly like a gentleman," was Beauclerk's comment upon hearing of his friend's accession of fortune, and as Johnson is now emerging from Grub Street, it is desirable to consider what manner of man was to be presented to the wider circles that were opening to receive him.

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### CHAPTER III

#### JOHNSON AND HIS FRIENDS.

IT IS not till some time after Johnson had come into the enjoyment of his pension, that we first see him through the eyes of competent observers. The Johnson of our knowledge, the most familiar figure to all students of English literary history had already long passed the prime of life, and done the greatest part of his literary work. His character, in the common phrase, had been "formed" years before; as, indeed, people's characters are chiefly formed in the cradle; and, not only his character, but the habits which are learnt in the great schoolroom of the world were fixed beyond any possibility of change. The strange eccentricities which had now become a second nature, amazed the society in which he was for over twenty years a prominent figure. Unsympathetic observers, those especially to whom the Chesterfield type represented the ideal of humanity, were simply disgusted or repelled. The man, they thought, might be in his place at a Grub Street pot-house; but had no business in a lady's drawing-room. If he had been modest and retiring, they might have put up with his defects; but Johnson was not a person whose qualities, good or bad, were of a kind to be ignored. Naturally enough, the fashionable world cared little for the rugged old giant.

"The great," said Johnson, "had tried him and given him up ; they had seen enough of him ;" and his reason was pretty much to the purpose. "Great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped," especially not, one may add, by an unwashed fist.

It is easy to blame them now. Everybody can see that a saint in beggar's rags is intrinsically better than a sinner in gold lace. But the principle is one of those which serves us for judging the dead, much more than for regulating our own conduct. Those, at any rate, may throw the first stone at the Horace Walpoles and Chesterfields, who are quite certain that they would ask a modern Johnson to their houses. The trial would be severe. Poor Mrs. Boswell complained grievously of her husband's idolatry. "I have seen many a bear led by a man," she said ; "but I never before saw a man led by a bear." The truth is, as Boswell explains, that the sage's uncouth habits, such as turning the candles' heads downwards to make them burn more brightly, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet, "could not but be disagreeable to a lady."

He had other habits still more annoying to people of delicate perceptions. A hearty despiser of all affectations, he despised especially the affectation of indifference to the pleasures of the table. "For my part," he said, "I mind my belly very studiously and very carefully, for I look upon it that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else." Avowing this principle he would innocently give himself the airs of a scientific epicure. "I, madam," he said to the terror of a lady with whom he was about to sup, "who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home, for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of

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his cook, whereas, madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge." But his pretensions to exquisite taste are by no means borne out by independent witnesses. "He laughs," said Tom Davies, "like a rhinoceros," and he seems to have eaten like a wolf—savagely, silently, and with undiscriminating fury. He was not a pleasant object during this performance. He was totally absorbed in the business of the moment, a strong perspiration came out, and the veins of his forehead swelled. He liked coarse satisfying dishes—boiled pork and veal-pie stuffed with plums and sugar; and in regard to wine, he seems to have accepted the doctrines of the critic of a certain fluid professing to be port, who asked, "What more can you want? It is black, and it is thick, and it makes you drunk." Claret, as Johnson put it, "is the liquor for boys, and port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy." He could, however, refrain, though he could not be moderate, and for all the latter part of his life, from 1766, he was a total abstainer. Nor, it should be added, does he ever appear to have sought for more than exhilaration from wine. His earliest intimate friend, Hector, said that he had never but once seen him drunk.

His appetite for more innocent kinds of food was equally excessive. He would eat seven or eight peaches before breakfast, and declared that he had only once in his life had as much wall-fruit as he wished. His consumption of tea was prodigious, beyond all precedent. Hawkins quotes Bishop Burnet as having drunk sixteen large cups every morning, a feat which would entitle him to be reckoned as a rival. "A hardened and shameless tea-drinker," Johnson called himself, who "with tea amuses the evenings, with tea solaces the midnights, and with tea

welcomes the mornings." One of his teapots, preserved by a relic-hunter, contained two quarts, and he professed to have consumed five and twenty cups at a sitting. Poor Mrs. Thrale complains that he often kept her up making tea for him till four in the morning. His reluctance to go to bed was due to the fact that his nights were periods of intense misery; but the vast potations of tea can scarcely have tended to improve them.

The huge frame was clad in the raggedest of garments, until his acquaintance with the Thrales led to a partial reform. His wigs were generally burnt in front, from his shortsighted knack of reading with his head close to the candle; and at the Thrales, the butler stood ready to effect a change of wigs as he passed into the dining-room. Once or twice we have accounts of his bursting into unusual splendour. He appeared at the first representation of *Irene* in a scarlet waistcoat laced with gold; and on one of his first interviews with Goldsmith he took the trouble to array himself decently, because Goldsmith was reported to have justified slovenly habits by the precedent of the leader of his craft. Goldsmith, judging by certain famous suits, seems to have profited by the hint more than his preceptor. As a rule, Johnson's appearance, before he became a pensioner, was worthy of the proverbial manner of Grub Street. Beauclerk used to describe how he had once taken a French lady of distinction to see Johnson in his chambers. On descending the staircase they heard a noise like thunder. Johnson was pursuing them, struck by a sudden sense of the demands upon his gallantry. He brushed in between Beauclerk and the lady, and seizing her hand conducted her to her coach. A crowd of people collected to stare at the sage, dressed in rusty brown, with a pair of old shoes for slippers, a shrivelled wig on the top

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of his head, and with shirtsleeves and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. In those days, clergymen and physicians were only just abandoning the use of their official costume in the streets, and Johnson's slovenly habits were even more marked than they would be at present. "I have no passion for clean linen," he once remarked, and it is to be feared that he must sometimes have offended more senses than one.

In spite of his uncouth habits of dress and manners, Johnson claimed and, in a sense, with justice, to be a polite man. "I look upon myself," he said once to Boswell, "as a very polite man." He could show the stately courtesy of a sound Tory, who cordially accepts the principle of social distinction, but has far too strong a sense of self-respect to fancy that compliance with the ordinary conventions can possibly lower his own position. Rank of the spiritual kind was especially venerable to him. "I should as soon have thought of contradicting a bishop," was a phrase which marked the highest conceivable degree of deference to a man whom he respected. Nobody, again, could pay more effective compliments, when he pleased; and the many female friends who have written of him agree, that he could be singularly attractive to women. Women are, perhaps, more inclined than men to forgive external roughness in consideration of the great charm of deep tenderness in a thoroughly masculine nature. A characteristic phrase was his remark to Miss Monckton. She had declared, in opposition to one of Johnson's prejudices, that Sterne's writings were pathetic: "I am sure," she said, "they have affected me." "Why," said Johnson, smiling and rolling himself about, "that is because, dearest, you are a dunce!" When she mentioned this to him some time afterwards he replied: "Madam, if I had

thought so, I certainly should not have said it." The truth could not be more neatly put.

Boswell notes, with some surprise, that when Johnson dined with Lord Monboddo he insisted upon rising when the ladies left the table, and took occasion to observe that politeness was "fictitious benevolence," and equally useful in common intercourse. Boswell's surprise seems to indicate that Scotchmen in those days were even greater bears than Johnson. He always insisted, as Miss Reynolds tells us, upon showing ladies to their carriages through Bolt Court, though his dress was such that her readers would, she thinks, be astonished that any man in his senses should have shown himself in it abroad or even at home. Another odd indication of Johnson's regard for good manners, so far as his lights would take him, was the extreme disgust with which he often referred to a certain footman in Paris, who used his fingers in place of sugar-tongs. So far as Johnson could recognize bad manners he was polite enough, though unluckily the limitation is one of considerable importance.

Johnson's claims to politeness were sometimes, it is true, put in a rather startling form. "Every man of any education," he once said to the amazement of his hearers, "would rather be called a rascal than accused of deficiency in the graces." Gibbon, who was present, slyly inquired of a lady whether among all her acquaintance she could not find *one* exception. According to Mrs. Thrale, he went even further. Dr. Barnard, he said, was the only man who had ever done justice to his good breeding; "and you may observe," he added, "that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity." He proceeded, according to Mrs. Thrale, but the report a little taxes our faith, to claim the virtues not only of respecting ceremony, but of never

contradicting or interrupting his hearers. It is rather odd that Dr. Barnard had once a sharp altercation with Johnson, and avenged himself by a sarcastic copy of verses in which, after professing to learn perfectness from different friends, he says,—

Johnson shall teach me how to place,  
In varied light, each borrow'd grace ;  
From him I'll learn to write ;  
Copy his clear familiar style,  
And by the roughness of his file,  
Grow, like himself, polite.

Johnson, on this as on many occasions, repented of the blow as soon as it was struck, and sat down by Barnard, "literally smoothing down his arms and knees," and beseeching pardon. Barnard accepted his apologies, but went home and wrote his little copy of verses.

Johnson's shortcomings in civility were no doubt due, in part, to the narrowness of his faculties of perception. He did not know, for he could not see, that his uncouth gestures and slovenly dress were offensive; and he was not so well able to observe others as to shake off the manners contracted in Grub Street. It is hard to study a manual of etiquette late in life, and for a man of Johnson's imperfect faculties it was probably impossible. Errors of this kind were always pardonable, and are now simply ludicrous. But Johnson often shocked his companions by more indefensible conduct. He was irascible, overbearing, and, when angry, vehement beyond all propriety. He was a "tremendous companion," said Garrick's brother; and men of gentle nature, like Charles Fox, often shrank from his company, and perhaps exaggerated his brutality.

Johnson, who had long regarded conversation as the chief amusement, came in later years to regard it as almost

the chief employment of life ; and he had studied the art with the zeal of a man pursuing a favourite hobby. He had always, as he told Sir Joshua Reynolds, made it a principle to talk on all occasions as well as he could. He had thus obtained a mastery over his weapons which made him one of the most accomplished of conversational gladiators. He had one advantage which has pretty well disappeared from modern society, and the disappearance of which has been destructive to excellence of talk. A good talker, even more than a good orator, implies a good audience. Modern society is too vast and too restless to give a conversationalist a fair chance. For the formation of real proficiency in the art, friends should meet often, sit long, and be thoroughly at ease. A modern audience generally breaks up before it is well warmed through, and includes enough strangers to break the magic circle of social electricity. The clubs in which Johnson delighted were excellently adapted to foster his peculiar talent. There a man could "fold his legs and have his talk out"—a pleasure hardly to be enjoyed now. And there a set of friends meeting regularly, and meeting to talk, learnt to sharpen each other's skill in all dialectic manœuvres. Conversation may be pleasantest, as Johnson admitted, when two friends meet quietly to exchange their minds without any thought of display. But conversation considered as a game, as a bout of intellectual sword-play, has also charms which Johnson intensely appreciated. His talk was not of the encyclopædia variety, like that of some more modern celebrities ; but it was full of apposite illustrations and unrivalled in keen argument, rapid flashes of wit and humour, scornful retort and dexterous sophistry. Sometimes he would fell his adversary at a blow ; his sword, as Boswell said, would be through your body in an instant without

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preliminary flourishes ; and in the excitement of talking for victory, he would use any device that came to hand. "There is no arguing with Johnson," said Goldsmith, quoting a phrase from Cibber, "for if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it."

Johnson's view of conversation is indicated by his remark about Burke. "That fellow," he said at a time of illness, "calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now, it would kill me." "It is when you come close to a man in conversation," he said on another occasion, "that you discover what his real abilities are. To make a speech in an assembly is a knack. Now I honour Thurlow, sir ; Thurlow is a fine fellow, he fairly puts his mind to yours."

Johnson's retorts were fair play under the conditions of the game, as it is fair play to kick an opponent's shins at football. But of course a man who had, as it were, become the acknowledged champion of the ring, and who had an irascible and thoroughly dogmatic temper, was tempted to become unduly imperious. In the company of which Savage was a distinguished member, one may guess that the conversational fervour sometimes degenerated into horse-play. Want of arguments would be supplied by personality, and the champion would avenge himself by brutality on an opponent who happened for once to be getting the best of him. Johnson, as he grew older and got into more polished society, became milder in his manners ; but he had enough of the old spirit left in him to break forth at times with ungovernable fury, and astonish the well-regulated minds of respectable ladies and gentlemen.

Anecdotes illustrative of this ferocity abound, and his best friends—except, perhaps, Reynolds and Burke—had all to suffer in turn. On one occasion, when he had made a rude speech even to Reynolds, Boswell states, though with

some hesitation, his belief that Johnson actually blushed. The records of his contests in this kind fill a large space in Boswell's pages. That they did not lead to worse consequences shows his absence of rancour. He was always ready and anxious for a reconciliation, though he would not press for one if his first overtures were rejected. There was no venom in the wounds he inflicted, for there was no ill-nature ; he was rough in the heat of the struggle, and in such cases careless in distributing blows ; but he never enjoyed giving pain. None of his tiffs ripened into permanent quarrels, and he seems scarcely to have lost a friend. He is a pleasant contrast in this, as in much else, to Horace Walpole, who succeeded, in the course of a long life, in breaking with almost all his old friends. No man set a higher value upon friendship than Johnson. "A man," he said to Reynolds, "ought to keep his friendship in constant repair ;" or he would find himself left alone as he grew older. "I look upon a day as lost," he said later in life, "in which I do not make a new acquaintance." Making new acquaintances did not involve dropping the old. The list of his friends is a long one, and includes, as it were, successive layers, superposed upon each other, from the earliest period of his life.

This is so marked a feature in Johnson's character, that it will be as well at this point to notice some of the friendships from which he derived the greatest part of his happiness. Two of his schoolfellows, Hector and Taylor, remained his intimates through life. Hector survived to give information to Boswell, and Taylor, then a prebendary of Westminster, read the funeral service over his old friend in the Abbey. He showed, said some of the bystanders, too little feeling. The relation between the two men was not one of special tenderness ; indeed they were so little

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congenial that Boswell rather gratuitously suspected his venerable teacher of having an eye to Taylor's will. It seems fairer to regard the acquaintance as an illustration of that curious adhesiveness which made Johnson cling to less attractive persons. At any rate, he did not show the complacence of the proper will-hunter. Taylor was rector of Bosworth and squire of Ashbourne. He was a fine specimen of the squire-parson ; a justice of the peace, a warm politician, and what was worse, a warm Whig. He raised gigantic bulls, bragged of selling cows for 120 guineas and more, and kept a noble butler in purple clothes and a large white wig. Johnson respected Taylor as a sensible man, but was ready to have a round with him on occasion. He snorted contempt when Taylor talked of breaking some small vessels if he took an emetic. " Bah," said the doctor, who regarded a valetudinarian as a " scoundrel," " if you have so many things that will break, you had better break your neck at once, and there's an end on't." Nay, if he did not condemn Taylor's cows, he criticized his bulldog with cruel acuteness. " No, sir, he is not well shaped ; for there is not the quick transition from the thickness of the fore-part to the *tenuity*—the thin part—behind, which a bulldog ought to have." On the more serious topic of politics his Jacobite fulminations roused Taylor " to a pitch of bellowing." Johnson roared out that if the people of England were fairly polled (this was in 1777) the present king would be sent away to-night, and his adherents hanged to-morrow. Johnson, however, rendered Taylor the substantial service of writing sermons for him, two volumes of which were published after they were both dead ; and Taylor must have been a bold man, if it be true, as has been said, that he refused to preach a sermon written by Johnson upon Mrs. Johnson's death, on

the ground that it spoke too favourably of the character of the deceased.

Johnson paid frequent visits to Lichfield, to keep up his old friends. One of them was Lucy Porter, his wife's daughter, with whom, according to Miss Seward, he had been in love before he married her mother. He was at least tenderly attached to her through life. And, for the most part, the good people of Lichfield seem to have been proud of their fellow-townsman, and gave him a substantial proof of their sympathy by continuing to him, on favourable terms, the lease of a house originally granted to his father. There was, indeed, one remarkable exception in Miss Seward, who belonged to a genus specially contemptible to the old doctor. She was one of the fine ladies who dabbled in poetry, and aimed at being the centre of a small literary circle at Lichfield. Her letters are amongst the most amusing illustrations of the petty affectations and squabbles characteristic of such a provincial clique. She evidently hated Johnson at the bottom of her small soul; and, indeed, though Johnson once paid her a preposterous compliment—a weakness of which this stern moralist was apt to be guilty in the company of ladies—he no doubt trod pretty roughly upon some of her pet vanities.

By far the most celebrated of Johnson's Lichfield friends was David Garrick, in regard to whom his relations were somewhat peculiar. Reynolds said that Johnson considered Garrick to be his own property, and would never allow him to be praised or blamed by any one else without contradiction. Reynolds composed a pair of imaginary dialogues to illustrate the proposition, in one of which Johnson attacks Garrick in answer to Reynolds, and in the other defends him in answer to Gibbon. The dialogues seem to be very good reproductions of the Johnsonian

manner, though perhaps the courteous Reynolds was a little too much impressed by its roughness ; and they probably include many genuine remarks of Johnson's. It is remarkable that the praise is far more pointed and elaborate than the blame, which turns chiefly upon the general inferiority of an actor's position. And, in fact, this seems to have corresponded to Johnson's opinion about Garrick as gathered from Boswell.

The two men had at bottom a considerable regard for each other, founded upon old association, mutual services, and reciprocal respect for talents of very different orders. But they were so widely separated by circumstances, as well as by a radical opposition of temperament, that any close intimacy could hardly be expected. The bear and the monkey are not likely to be intimate friends. Garrick's rapid elevation in fame and fortune seems to have produced a certain degree of envy in his old schoolmaster. A grave moral philosopher has, of course, no right to look askance at the rewards which fashion lavishes upon men of lighter and less lasting merit, and which he professes to despise. Johnson, however, was troubled with a rather excessive allowance of human nature. Moreover he had the good old-fashioned contempt for players, characteristic both of the Tory and the inartistic mind. He asserted roundly that he looked upon players as no better than dancing-dogs. "But, sir, you will allow that some players are better than others?" "Yes, sir, as some dogs dance better than others." So when Goldsmith accused Garrick of grossly flattering the queen, Johnson exclaimed, "And as to meanness—how is it mean in a player, a showman, a fellow who exhibits himself for a shilling, to flatter his queen?" At another time Boswell suggested that we might respect a great player. "What! sir," exclaimed Johnson, "a

fellow who claps a hump upon his back and a lump on his leg and cries, '*I am Richard III.*'? Nay, sir, a ballad-singer is a higher man, for he does two things : he repeats and he sings ; there is both recitation and music in his performance—the player only recites."

Such sentiments were not very likely to remain unknown to Garrick nor to put him at ease with Johnson, whom, indeed, he always suspected of laughing at him. They had a little tiff on account of Johnson's Edition of Shakspeare. From some misunderstanding, Johnson did not make use of Garrick's collection of old plays. Johnson, it seems, thought that Garrick should have courted him more, and perhaps sent the plays to his house; whereas Garrick, knowing that Johnson treated books with a roughness ill-suited to their constitution, thought that he had done quite enough by asking Johnson to come to his library. The revenge—if it was revenge—taken by Johnson was to say nothing of Garrick in his Preface, and to glance obliquely at his non-communication of his rarities. He seems to have thought that it would be a lowering of Shakspeare to admit that his fame owed anything to Garrick's exertions.

Boswell innocently communicated to Garrick a criticism of Johnson's upon one of his poems—

I'd smile with the simple and feed with the poor.

"Let me smile with the wise, and feed with the rich," was Johnson's tolerably harmless remark. Garrick, however, did not like it, and when Boswell tried to console him by saying that Johnson gored everybody in turn, and added, "*fænum habet in cornu.*" "Ay," said Garrick vehemently, "he has a whole mow of it."

The most unpleasant incident was when Garrick proposed rather too freely to be a member of the Club. Johnson said that the first duke in England had no right to use such language, and said, according to Mrs. Thrale, "If Garrick does apply, I'll blackball him. Surely we ought to be able to sit in a society like ours—

'Unelbowed by a gamester, pimp, or player!'"

Nearly ten years afterwards, however, Johnson favoured his election, and when he died, declared that the Club should have a year's widowhood. No successor to Garrick was elected during that time.

Johnson sometimes ventured to criticise Garrick's acting, but here Garrick could take his full revenge. The purblind Johnson was not, we may imagine, much of a critic in such matters. Garrick reports him to have said of an actor at Lichfield, "There is a courtly vivacity about the fellow;" when, in fact, said Garrick, "he was the most vulgar ruffian that ever went upon boards."

In spite of such collisions of opinion and mutual criticism, Johnson seems to have spoken in the highest terms of Garrick's good qualities, and they had many pleasant meetings. Garrick takes a prominent part in two or three of the best conversations in Boswell, and seems to have put his interlocutors in specially good temper. Johnson declared him to be "the first man in the world for sprightly conversation." He said that Dryden had written much better prologues than any of Garrick's, but that Garrick had written more good prologues than Dryden. He declared that it was wonderful how little Garrick had been spoilt by all the flattery that he had received. No wonder if he was a little vain: "a man who is perpetually flattered

in every mode that can be conceived : so many bellows have blown the fuel, that one wonders he is not by this time become a cinder ! " " If all this had happened to me," he said on another occasion, " I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down everybody that stood in the way. Consider, if all this had happened to Cibber and Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. Yet Garrick speaks to us," smiling. He admitted at the same time that Garrick had raised the profession of a player. He defended Garrick, too, against the common charge of avarice. Garrick, as he pointed out, had been brought up in a family whose study it was to make four-pence go as far as fourpence-halfpenny. Johnson remembered in early days drinking tea with Garrick when Peg Woffington made it, and made it, as Garrick grumbled, " as red as blood." But when Garrick became rich he became liberal. He had, so Johnson declared, given away more money than any man in England.

After Garrick's death, Johnson took occasion to say, in the *Lives of the Poets*, that the death " had eclipsed the gaiety of nations and diminished the public stock of harmless pleasures." Boswell ventured to criticise the observation rather spitefully. " Why *nations* ? Did his gaiety extend further than his own nation ? " " Why, sir," replied Johnson, " some imagination must be allowed. Besides, we may say *nations* if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety—which they have not." On the whole, in spite of various drawbacks, Johnson's reported observations upon Garrick will appear to be discriminative, and yet, on the whole, strongly favourable to his character. Yet we are not quite surprised that Mrs. Garrick did not respond to a hint thrown out by Johnson, that he would be glad to write the life of his friend.

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At Oxford, Johnson acquired the friendship of Dr. Adams, afterwards Master of Pembroke and author of a once well-known reply to Hume's argument upon miracles. He was an amiable man, and was proud to do the honours of the university to his old friend, when, in later years, Johnson revisited the much-loved scenes of his neglected youth. The warmth of Johnson's regard for old days is oddly illustrated by an interview recorded by Boswell with one Edwards, a fellow-student whom he met again in 1778, not having previously seen him since 1729. They had lived in London for forty years without once meeting, a fact more surprising then than now. Boswell eagerly gathered up the little scraps of college anecdote which the meeting produced, but perhaps his best find was a phrase of Edwards himself. "You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson," he said; "I have tried, too, in my time to be a philosopher; but, I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in." The phrase, as Boswell truly says, records an exquisite trait of character.

Of the friends who gathered round Johnson during his period of struggle, many had vanished before he became well known. The best loved of all seems to have been Dr. Bathurst, a physician, who, failing to obtain practice, joined the expedition to Havannah, and fell a victim to the climate (1762). Upon him Johnson pronounced a panegyric which has contributed a proverbial phrase to the language. "Dear Bathurst," he said, "was a man to my very heart's content : he hated a fool and he hated a rogue, and he hated a Whig ; he was a *very good hater*." Johnson remembered Bathurst in his prayers for years after his loss, and received from him a peculiar legacy. Francis Barber had been the negro slave of Bathurst's father, who left him his liberty by will. Dr. Bathurst allowed him to enter

Johnson's service ; and Johnson sent him to school at considerable expense, and afterwards retained him in his service with little interruption till his own death. Once Barber ran away to sea, and was discharged, oddly enough, by the good offices of Wilkes, to whom Smollett applied on Johnson's behalf. Barber became an important member of Johnson's family, some of whom reproached him for his liberality to the nigger. No one ever solved the great problem as to what services were rendered by Barber to his master, whose wig was "as impenetrable by a comb as a quickset hedge," and whose clothes were never touched by the brush.

Among the other friends of this period must be reckoned his biographer, Hawkins, an attorney who was afterwards Chairman of the Middlesex Justices, and knighted on presenting an address to the King. Boswell regarded poor Sir John Hawkins with all the animosity of a rival author, and with some spice of wounded vanity. He was grievously offended, so at least says Sir John's daughter, on being described in the *Life of Johnson* as "Mr. James Boswell" without a solitary epithet such as celebrated or well-known. If that was really his feeling, he had his revenge ; for no one book ever so suppressed another as Boswell's Life suppressed Hawkins's. In truth, Hawkins was a solemn prig, remarkable chiefly for the unusual intensity of his conviction that all virtue consists in respectability. He had a special aversion to "goodness of heart," which he regarded as another name for a quality properly called extravagance or vice. Johnson's tenacity of old acquaintance introduced him into the Club, where he made himself so disagreeable, especially, as it seems, by rudeness to Burke, that he found it expedient to invent a pretext for resignation. Johnson called him a "very un-

clubable man," and may perhaps have intended him in the quaint description : " I really believe him to be an honest man at the bottom ; though, to be sure, he is rather penurious, and he is somewhat mean ; and it must be owned he has some degree of brutality, and is not without a tendency to savageness that cannot well be defended."

In a list of Johnson's friends it is proper to mention Richardson and Hawkesworth. Richardson seems to have given him substantial help, and was repaid by favourable comparisons with Fielding, scarcely borne out by the verdict of posterity. " Fielding," said Johnson, " could tell the hour by looking at the clock ; whilst Richardson knew how the clock was made." " There is more knowledge of the heart," he said at another time, " in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*." Johnson's preference of the sentimentalist to the man whose humour and strong sense were so like his own, shows how much his criticism was biassed by his prejudices ; though, of course, Richardson's extreem decency was a recommendation to the moralist. Hawkesworth's intimacy with Johnson seems to have been chiefly in the period between the *Dictionary* and the pension. He was considered to be Johnson's best imitator ; and has vanished like other imitators. His fate, very doubtful if the story believed at the time be true, was a curious one for a friend of Johnson's. He had made some sceptical remarks as to the efficacy of prayer in his preface to the *South Sea Voyages* ; and was so bitterly attacked by a " Christian" in the papers, that he destroyed himself by a dose of opium.

The younger friends, who became disciples of the sage soon after the appearance of the *Rambler*, are prominent figures in the later circle. One of these was Bennet Langton, a man of good family, fine scholarship, and very

amiable character. His exceedingly tall and slender figure was compared by Best to the stork in Raphael's cartoon of the Miraculous Draught of Fishes. Miss Hawkins describes him sitting with one leg twisted round the other as though to occupy the smallest possible space, and playing with his gold snuff-box with a mild countenance and sweet smile. The gentle, modest creature was loved by Johnson, who could warm into unusual eloquence in singing his praises. The doctor, however, was rather fond of discussing with Boswell the faults of his friend. They seem to have chiefly consisted in a certain languor or sluggishness of temperament which allowed his affairs to get into perplexity. Once, when arguing the delicate question as to the propriety of telling a friend of his wife's unfaithfulness, Boswell, after his peculiar fashion, chose to enliven the abstract statement by the purely imaginary hypothesis of Mr. and Mrs. Langton being in this position. Johnson said that it would be useless to tell Langton, because he would be too sluggish to get a divorce. Once Langton was the unconscious cause of one of Johnson's oddest performances. Langton had employed Chambers, a common friend of his and Johnson's, to draw his will. Johnson, talking to Chambers and Boswell, was suddenly struck by the absurdity of his friend's appearing in the character of testator. His companions, however, were utterly unable to see in what the joke consisted; but Johnson laughed obstreperously and irrepressibly: he laughed till he reached the Temple Gate; and when in Fleet Street went almost into convulsions of hilarity. Holding on by one of the posts in the street, he sent forth such peals of laughter that they seemed in the silence of the night to resound from Temple Bar to Fleet Ditch.

Not long before his death, Johnson applied to Langton

for spiritual advice. "I desired him to tell me sincerely in what he thought my life was faulty." Langton wrote upon a sheet of paper certain texts recommending Christian charity ; and explained, upon inquiry, that he was pointing at Johnson's habit of contradiction. The old doctor began by thanking him earnestly for his kindness ; but gradually waxed savage and asked Langton, "in a loud and angry tone, What is your drift, sir ?" He complained of the well-meant advice to Boswell, with a sense that he had been unjustly treated. It was a scene for a comedy, as Reynolds observed, to see a penitent get into a passion and belabour his confessor.

Through Langton, Johnson became acquainted with the friend whose manner was in the strongest contrast to his own. Topham Beauclerk was a man of fashion. He was commended to Johnson by a likeness to Charles II., from whom he was descended, being the grandson of the first Duke of St. Albans. Beauclerk was a man of literary and scientific tastes. He inherited some of the moral laxity which Johnson chose to pardon in his ancestor. Some years after his acquaintance with Boswell he married Lady Diana Spencer, a lady who had been divorced upon his account from her husband, Lord Bolingbroke. But he took care not to obtrude his faults of life, whatever they may have been, upon the old moralist, who entertained for him a peculiar affection. He specially admired Beauclerk's skill in the use of a more polished, if less vigorous, style of conversation than his own. He envied the ease with which Beauclerk brought out his sly incisive retorts. "No man," he said, "ever was so free when he was going to say a good thing, from a look that expressed that it was coming ; or, when he had said it, from a look that expressed that it had come." When Beauclerk was dying

(in 1780), Johnson said, with a faltering voice, that he would walk to the extremity of the diameter of the earth to save him. Two little anecdotes are expressive of his tender feeling for this incongruous friend. Boswell had asked him to sup at Beauclerk's. He started, but, on the way, recollecting himself, said, "I cannot go; but *I do not love Beauclerk the less.*" Beauclerk had put upon a portrait of Johnson the inscription,—

Ingenium ingens  
In culto latet hoc sub corpore.

Langton, who bought the portrait, had the inscription removed. "L. was kind in you to take it off," said Johnson; and, after a short pause, "not unkind in him to put it on."

Early in their acquaintance, the two young men, Beau and Lanky, as Johnson called them, had sat up one night at a tavern till three in the morning. The courageous thought struck them that they would knock up the old philosopher. He came to the door of his chambers, poker in hand, with an old wig for a nightcap. On hearing their errand, the sage exclaimed, "What! is it you, you dogs? I'll have a frisk with you." And so Johnson with the two youths, his juniors by about thirty years, proceeded to make a night of it. They amazed the fruiters in Covent Garden; they brewed a bowl of bishop in a tavern, while Johnson quoted the poet's address to Sleep,—

"Short, O short, be then thy reign,  
And give us to the world again!"

They took a boat to Billingsgate, and Johnson, with Beauclerk, kept up their amusement for the following day, when Langton deserted them to go to breakfast with some

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young ladies, and Johnson scolded him for leaving his friends "to go and sit with a parcel of wretched *unidea'd* girls." "I shall have my old friend to bail out of the round-house," said Garrick when he heard of this queer alliance; and he told Johnson that he would be in the *Chronicle* for his frolic. "He *durst* not do such a thing. His wife would not let him," was the moralist's retort.

Some friends, known to fame by other titles than their connexion with Johnson, had by this time gathered round them. Among them was one, whose art he was unable to appreciate, but whose fine social qualities and dignified equability of temper made him a valued and respected companion. Reynolds had settled in London at the end of 1752. Johnson met him at the house of Miss Cotterell. Reynolds had specially admired Johnson's *Life of Savage*, and, on their first meeting, happened to make a remark which delighted Johnson. The ladies were regretting the loss of a friend to whom they were under obligations. "You have, however," said Reynolds, "the comfort of being relieved from a burden of gratitude." The saying is a little too much like Rochefoucauld, and too true to be pleasant; but it was one of those keen remarks which Johnson appreciated because they prick a bubble of commonplace moralizing without demanding too literal an acceptance. He went home to sup with Reynolds and became his intimate friend. On another occasion, Johnson was offended by two ladies of rank at the same house, and by way of taking down their pride, asked Reynolds in a loud voice, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we both worked as hard as we could?" "His appearance," says Sir Joshua's sister, Miss Reynolds, "might suggest the poor author: as he was not likely in that place to be a blacksmith or a porter." Poor Mis-

Reynolds, who tells this story, was another attraction to Reynolds' house. She was a shy, retiring maiden lady, who vexed her famous brother by following in his steps without his talents, and was deeply hurt by his annoyance at the unintentional mockery. Johnson was through life a kind and judicious friend to her; and had attracted her on their first meeting by a significant indication of his character. He said that when going home to his lodgings at one or two in the morning, he often saw poor children asleep on thresholds and stals—the wretched "street Arabs" of the day—and that he used to put pennies into their hands that they might buy a breakfast.

Two friends, who deserve to be placed beside Reynolds, came from Ireland to seek their fortunes in London. Edmund Burke, incomparably the greatest writer upon political philosophy in English literature, the master of a style unrivalled for richness, flexibility, and vigour, was radically opposed to Johnson on party questions, though his language upon the French Revolution, after Johnson's death, would have satisfied even the strongest prejudices of his old friend. But he had qualities which commended him even to the man who called him a "bottomless Whig," and who generally spoke of Whigs as rascals, and maintained that the first Whig was the devil. If his intellect was wider, his heart was as warm as Johnson's, and in conversation he merited the generous applause and warm emulation of his friends. Johnson was never tired of praising the extraordinary readiness and spontaneity of Burke's conversation. "If a man," he said, "went under a shed at the same time with Burke to avoid a shower, he would say, 'This is an extraordinary man.' Or if Burke went into a stable to see his horse dressed, the ostler would say, 'We have had an extraordinary man here.'"

When Burke was first going into Parliament, Johnson said in answer to Hawkins, who wondered that such a man should get a seat, "We who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country." Speaking of certain other members of Parliament, more after the heart of Sir John Hawkins, he said that he grudged success to a man who made a figure by a knowledge of a few forms, though his mind was "as narrow as the neck of a vinegar cruet," but then he did not grudge Burke's being the first man in the House of Commons, for he would be the first man everywhere. And Burke equally admitted Johnson's supremacy in conversation. "It is enough for me," he said to some one who regretted Johnson's monopoly of the talk on a particular occasion, "to have rung the bell for him."

The other Irish adventurer, whose career was more nearly moulded upon that of Johnson, came to London in 1756, and made Johnson's acquaintance. Some time afterwards (in or before 1761) Goldsmith, like Johnson, had tasted the bitterness of an usher's life, and escaped into the scarcely more tolerable regions of Grub Street. After some years of trial, he was becoming known to the booksellers as a serviceable hand, and had two works in his desk destined to lasting celebrity. His landlady (apparently 1764) one day arrested him for debt. Johnson, summoned to his assistance, sent him a guinea and speedily followed. The guinea had already been changed, and Goldsmith was consoling himself with a bottle of Madeira. Johnson corked the bottle, and a discussion of ways and means brought out the manuscript of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Johnson looked into it, took it to a bookseller, got sixty pounds for it, and returned to Goldsmith, who paid his rent and administered a sound rating to his landlady.

The relation thus indicated is characteristic; Johnson was as a rough but helpful elder brother to poor Goldsmith, gave him advice, sympathy, and applause, and at times criticised him pretty sharply, or brought down his conversational bludgeon upon his sensitive friend. "He has nothing of the bear but his skin," was Goldsmith's comment upon his clumsy friend, and the two men appreciated each other at bottom. Some of their readers may be inclined to resent Johnson's attitude of superiority. The admirably pure and tender heart, and the exquisite intellectual refinement implied in the *Vicar* and the *Traveller*, force us to love Goldsmith in spite of superficial foibles, and when Johnson prunes or interpolates lines in the *Traveller*, we feel as though a woodman's axe was hacking at a most delicate piece of carving. The evidence of contemporary observers, however, must force impartial readers to admit that poor Goldsmith's foibles were real, however amply compensated by rare and admirable qualities. Garrick's assertion, that he "wrote like an angel but talked like poor Poll," expresses the unanimous opinion of all who had actually seen him. Undoubtedly some of the stories of his childlike vanity, his frankly expressed envy, and his general capacity for blundering, owe something to Boswell's feeling that he was a rival near the throne, and sometimes poor Goldsmith's humorous self-assertion may have been taken too seriously by blunt English wits. One may doubt, for example, whether he was really jealous of a puppet tossing a pike, and unconscious of his absurdity in saying "Pshaw! I could do it better myself!" Boswell, however, was too good an observer to misrepresent at random, and he has, in fact, explained very well the true meaning of his remarks. Goldsmith was an excitable Irishman of genius,

who tumbled out whatever came uppermost, and revealed the feelings of the moment with utter want of reserve. His self-controlled companions wondered, ridiculed, misinterpreted, and made fewer hits as well as fewer misses. His anxiety to "get in and shine," made him, according to Johnson, an "unsocial" companion. "Goldsmith," he said, "had not temper enough for the game he played. He staked too much. A man might always get a fall from his inferior in the chances of talk, and Goldsmith felt his falls too keenly." He had certainly some trials of temper in Johnson's company. "Stay, stay," said a German, stopping him in the full flow of his eloquence, "Toctor Johnson is going to say something." An Eton Master called Graham, who was supping with the two doctors, and had got to the pitch of looking at one person, and talking to another, said, "Doctor, I shal! be glad to see *you* at Eton." "I shall be glad to wait on you," said Goldsmith. "No," replied Graham, "'tis not you I mean, Doctor Minor; 'tis Doctor Major there." Poor Goldsmith said afterwards, "Graham is a fellow to make one commit suicide."

Boswell who attributes some of Goldsmith's sayings about Johnson to envy, said with probable truth that Goldsmith had not more envy than others, but only spoke of it more freely. Johnson argued that we must be angry with a man who had so much of an odious quality that he could not keep it to himself, but let it "boil over." The feeling, at any rate, was momentary and totally free from malice; and Goldsmith's criticisms upon Johnson and his idolators seem to have been fair enough. His objection to Boswell's substituting a monarchy for a republic has already been mentioned. At another time he checked Boswell's flow of panegyric by asking, "Is he like Burke,

who winds into a subject like a serpent?" To which Boswell replied with charming irrelevance, "Johnson is the Hercules who strangled serpents in his cradle." The last of Goldsmith's hits was suggested by Johnson's shaking his sides with laughter because Goldsmith admired the skill with which the little fishes in the fable were made to talk in character. "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think," was the retort, "for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

In spite of sundry little sparrings, Johnson fully appreciated Goldsmith's genius. Possibly his authority hastened the spread of public appreciation, as he seemed to claim, whilst repudiating Boswell's too flattering theory that it had materially raised Goldsmith's position. When Reynolds quoted the authority of Fox in favour of the *Traveller*, saying that his friends might suspect that they had been too partial, Johnson replied very truly that the *Traveller* was beyond the need of Fox's praise, and that the partiality of Goldsmith's friends had always been against him. They would hardly give him a hearing. "Goldsmith," he added, "was a man who, whatever he wrote, always did it better than any other man could do." Johnson's settled opinion in fact was that embodied in the famous epitaph with its "nihil tetigit quod non ornavit," and, though dedications are perhaps the only literary product more generally insincere than epitaphs, we may believe that Goldsmith too meant what he said in the dedication of *She Stoops to Conquer*. "It may do me some honour to inform the public that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety."

Though Johnson was thus rich in friendship, two connexions have still to be noticed which had an exceptional bearing upon his fame and happiness. In January, 1765, he made the acquaintance of the Thrales. Mr. Thrale was the proprietor of the brewery which afterwards became that of Barclay and Perkins. He was married in 1763 to a Miss Hester Lynch Salisbury, who has become celebrated from her friendship with Johnson.<sup>1</sup> She was a woman of great vivacity and independence of character. She had a sensitive and passionate, if not a very tender nature, and enough literary culture to appreciate Johnson's intellectual power, and on occasion to play a very respectable part in conversation. She had far more Latin and English scholarship than fell to the lot of most ladies of her day, and wit enough to preserve her from degenerating like some of the "blues," into that most offensive of beings—a feminine prig. Her marriage had been one of convenience, and her husband's want of sympathy, and jealousy of any interference in business matters, forced her, she says, to take to literature as her sole resource. "No wonder," she adds, "if I loved my books and children." It is, perhaps, more to be wondered at that her children seem to have had a rather subordinate place in her affections. The marriage, however, though not of the happiest, was perfectly decorous. Mrs. Thrale discharged her domestic duties irreproachably, even when she seems to have had some real cause of complaint. To the world she eclipsed her husband, a solid respectable man, whose mind, according to Johnson, struck the hours very regularly, though it did not mark the minutes.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Thrale was born in 1740 or 1741, probably the latter. Thrale was born in 1724.

The Thrales were introduced to Johnson by their common friend, Arthur Murphy, an actor and dramatist, who afterwards became the editor of Johnson's works. One day, when calling upon Johnson, they found him in such a fit of despair that Thrale tried to stop his mouth by placing his hand before it. The pair then joined in begging Johnson to leave his solitary abode, and come to them at their country-house at Streatham. He complied, and for the next sixteen years a room was set apart for him, both at Streatham and in their house in Southwark. He passed a large part of his time with them, and derived from the intimacy most of the comfort of his later years. He treated Mrs. Thrale with a kind of paternal gallantry, her age at the time of their acquaintance being about twenty-four, and his fifty-five. He generally called her by the playful name of "my mistress," addressed little poems to her, gave her solid advice, and gradually came to confide to her his miseries and ailments with rather surprising frankness. She flattered and amused him, and soothed his sufferings and did something towards humanizing his rugged exterior. There was one little grievance between them which requires notice. Johnson's pet virtue in private life was a rigid regard for truth. He spoke, it was said of him, as if he was always on oath. He would not, for example, allow his servant to use the phrase "not at home," and even in the heat of conversation resisted the temptation to give point to an anecdote. The lively Mrs. Thrale rather fretted against the restraint, and Johnson admonished her in vain. He complained to Boswell that she was willing to have that said of her, which the best of mankind had died rather than have said of them. Boswell, the faithful imitator of his master in this respect, delighted in taking up the parable. "Now, madam, give

me leave to catch you in the fact," he said on one occasion ; " it was not an old woman, but an old man whom I mentioned, as having told me this," and he recounts his check to the " lively lady " with intense complacency. As may be imagined, Boswell and Mrs. Thrale did not love each other, in spite of the well-meant efforts of the sage to bring about a friendly feeling between his disciples.

It is time to close this list of friends with the inimitable Boswell. James Boswell, born in 1740, was the eldest son of a Whig laird and lord of sessions. He had acquired some English friends at the Scotch universities, among whom must be mentioned Mr. Temple, an English clergyman. Boswell's correspondence with Temple, discovered years after his death by a singular chance, and published in 1857, is, after the *Life of Johnson*, one of the most curious exhibitions of character in the language. Boswell was intended for the Scotch bar, and studied civil law at Utrecht in the winter of 1762. It was in the following summer that he made Johnson's acquaintance.

Perhaps the fundamental quality in Boswell's character was his intense capacity for enjoyment. He was, as Mr. Carlyle puts it, " glutonously fond of whatever would yield him a little solacement, were it only of a stomachic character." His love of good living and good drink would have made him a hearty admirer of his countryman, Burns, had Burns been famous in Boswell's youth. No body could have joined with more thorough abandonment in the chorus to the poet's liveliest songs in praise of love and wine. He would have made an excellent fourth when " Willie brewed a peck of malt, and Rab and Allan came to see," and the drinking contest for the Whistle commiserated in another lyric would have excited his keenest interest. He was always delighted when he could get

Johnson to discuss the ethics and statistics of drinking. "I am myself," he says, "a lover of wine, and therefore curious to hear whatever is remarkable concerning drinking." The remark is *à propos* to a story of Dr. Campbell drinking thirteen bottles of port at a sitting. Lest this should seem incredible, he quotes Johnson's dictum. "Sir, if a man drinks very slowly and lets one glass evaporate before he takes another, I know not how long he may drink." Boswell's faculty for making love was as great as his power of drinking. His letters to Temple record with amusing frankness the vicissitudes of some of his courtships and the versatility of his passions.

Boswell's tastes, however, were by no means limited to sensual or frivolous enjoyments. His appreciation of the bottle was combined with an equally hearty sensibility to more intellectual pleasures. He had not a spark of philosophic or poetic power, but within the ordinary range of such topics as can be discussed at a dinner-party, he had an abundant share of liveliness and intelligence. His palate was as keen for good talk as for good wine. He was an admirable recipient, if not an originator, of shrewd or humorous remarks upon life and manners. What in regard to sensual enjoyment was mere gluttony, appeared in higher matters as an insatiable curiosity. At times this faculty became intolerable to his neighbours. "I will not be baited with what and why," said poor Johnson, one day in desperation. "Why is a cow's tail long? Why is a fox's tail bushy?" "Sir," said Johnson on another occasion, when Boswell was cross-examining a third person about him in his presence. "You have but two subjects, yourself and me. I am sick of both." Boswell, however, was not to be repelled by such a retort as this, or even by ruder rebuffs. Once when dis-

cussing the means of getting a friend to leave London, Johnson said in revenge for a previous offence. "Nay, sir, we'll send you to him. If your presence doesn't drive a man out of his house, nothing will." Boswell was "horribly shocked," but he still stuck to his victim like a leech, and pried into the minutest details of his life and manners. He observed with conscientious accuracy that though Johnson abstained from milk one fast-day, he did not reject it when put in his cup. He notes the whistlings and puffings, the trick of saying "too-too-too" of his idol : and it was a proud day when he won a bet by venturing to ask Johnson what he did with certain scraped bits of orange-peel. His curiosity was not satisfied on this occasion ; but it would have made him the prince of interviewers in these days. Nothing delighted him so much as rubbing shoulders with any famous or notorious person. He scraped acquaintance with Voltaire, Wesley, Rousseau, and Paoli, as well as with Miss Rudd, a forgotten heroine of the *Newgate Calendar*. He was as eager to talk to Hume the sceptic, or Wilkes the demagogue, as to the orthodox Tory, Johnson ; and, if repelled, it was from no deficiency in daring. In 1767, he took advantage of his travels in Corsica to introduce himself to Lord Chatham, then Prime Minister. The letter moderately ends by asking, "*Could your lordship find time to honour me now and then with a letter?* I have been told how favourably your lordship has spoken of me. To correspond with a Paoli and with a Chatham is enough to keep a young man ever ardent in the pursuit of virtuous fame." No other young man of the day, we may be sure, would have dared to make such a proposal to the majestic orator.

His absurd vanity, and the greedy craving for notoriety

